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IN CHARGE: Mayor Eric Hotson. Search 'Mayor'

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## BECKHAM MEETS GURKHAS

Football legend David Beckham made the most of his injury lay-off by visiting Kent-based Gurkha soldiers on the frontline.

The former England captain, who was declared unfit to play in the 2010 World Cup due to an ankle knock, met troops at Camp Bastion in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

During his three-day trip, Beckham, who plays for LA Galaxy, was presented with a traditional kukri knife from the 1st Battalion Royal Gurkha Rifles.

FULL STORY ON PAGE THREE

BY ANNA WHITE

A DISGRACED deputy head who sent sexually-charged messages to a vulnerable pupil has escaped a jail sentence.

William Whillock, known as Bill, of Headcorn Road, Staplehurst, was charged with possessing 14 indecent images of a teenage schoolgirl.

The New School at West Heath teacher was sentenced at Maidstone Crown Court on Friday.

Whillock – who was also head of child protection at the school, near Sevenoaks – was given a three-year community order.

The father of the victim, who attended the sentencing, said Whillock should be jailed for his crimes.

He said: "He is lucky he didn't end up going to prison, but the situation was nipped in the bud. If the messages hadn't been found it could have continued and we might be in a very different situation. He got off very lightly. He should have gone to prison – I wanted him to."

Shamed Whillock, who turned 57 on Friday, was reported to the head mistress of the school, where Princess Diana attended as a child, by a colleague on January 13.

The fellow teacher became suspicious after she spotted the 17-year-old girl writing 'I love Bill' on a folder and then discovered dozens of inappropriate text and media messages on the victim's mobile phone.

He admitted he had received the images and claimed he had told the girl it was wrong and asked her to stop. But messages were later

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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**your lifestyle**

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# Lansley gives hope to saving maternity unit

■ BY ANNA WHITE

CAMPAIGNERS fighting plans to downgrade Maidstone's maternity unit have received a major boost after the new Secretary of State promised to give communities more power.

Conservative Health Secretary Andrew Lansley announced on Friday that NHS Trusts' proposals would be required to meet a new set of guidelines to be granted approval. The decision could affect Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust's plan to move its consultant-led maternity unit to the new Pembury hospital.

Mr Lansley said: "Today I am fulfilling the pledge I made before the election to put an end to the imposition of top-down reconfigurations in the NHS."

"We are committed to devolving power to local communities – to the people, patients, GPs and councils who are best placed to determine the nature of their local NHS services."

"Local decision making is essential to improve outcomes for patients and drive up quality."

Newly-appointed Maidstone and the Weald MP Helen Grant has fiercely campaigned to overturn the NHS Trust's decision and pledged it would be on the top of her list if elected.

She now hopes the new guidelines will help her deliver on her promise.

Mrs Grant said: "I am thrilled to hear of our election pledge coming through so quickly."

"It just goes to show that our voices have been heard loud and clear and we can make that difference."

"This is not the end of the story but the new criteria that the NHS Trust will have to meet in order to get their plan through looks espe-



**PLEDGE:** Helen Grant and Andrew Lansley

cially difficult here in Maidstone, not least because of the marvellous unified campaign and public support that exists to keep a full maternity service in Maidstone."

The criteria NHS Trusts must meet to implement changes include demonstrating a focus on improving patient outcomes, consider patient choice, have support from GP commissioners and be based on sound clinical advice.

The maternity issue was referred to the Secretary of State's office after it passed through Maidstone council and the Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP).

It was feared the plans may not be eligible for the new criteria as in an article in The Daily Telegraph, written by the Health Secretary, he said advanced plans cannot be altered and work is already complete on the new Pembury unit.

But Mrs Grant told Yourmaidstone she has spoken to the Health Secretary's specialist advisor who indicated the plans will have to meet the new criteria. The Maidstone and Weald MP is due to meet with Mr Lansley next week.

A spokesman for Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust said they are waiting for an "official announcement" from the Department of Health.

## Police hunt man for home assault crime

POLICE are hunting a thug who assaulted a young man at a house in Maidstone.

The suspect attacked the 21-year-old victim on Thursday, May 10.

The offender injured the man's back during the incident, which happened at 10.30pm at a property in Square Hill, near the town centre.

In a bid to catch the attacker, police have released CCTV images of a man they want to speak in connection with the incident.

Anyone who recognises the man is asked to call Maidstone Crime Unit on 01622 604 266.



**WANTED:** Image of man on CCTV

## Bentley driver busted for excessive speed

THE boss of a large IT company has been banned from driving for 56 days after being caught doing nearly double the speed limit in a luxury car.

Paul Swords, 34, of Rougemont, West Malling, will also have to pay a £1,000 fine.

The Skype Group CEO admitted driving a Bentley Continental at 88mph in a 50 mph zone on the A228 West Malling bypass on September 19 last year.

He pleaded guilty to speeding at Sittingbourne Magistrates Court on May 12. The court heard a police officer had to travel at between 109mph and 127mph to catch Swords.

## Help the Heroes to benefit from prison

PRISON officers are hoping to raise £10,000 for ex-servicemen and women by cycling from Maidstone to Gibraltar.

The officers who work at the town's prison will cycle to the coast and through France and Spain to complete the 1,500 route in aid for the Help for Heroes charity.

In a bid to raise as much money as possible, while the workers are cycling outdoors, a group of ten inmates will also complete the same distance within the prison grounds.

Maidstone prison governor Andy Hudson said: "The fact that a group of offenders have now asked to join is a testament to the good staff-prisoner relationships at Maidstone prison."

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## 'A very grave breach of trust'

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

discovered from him asking her to send more and even sexually propositioning her.

The court heard how he also repeatedly referred to the victim as princess and paid her inappropriate compliments.

The father-of-three was arrested at the school the following day, January 14, and immediately suspended.

Mr Whillock said the relationship started professionally when the pupil joined the school in year eight or nine and that he offered her support as she did not have any friends.

It was heard that the youngster's

parents and the head mistress knew he would text her and sometimes meet for coffee in Maidstone and Sevenoaks.

In an interview with the police, the girl claimed she had "looked to him for support" since she was 13 years old.

Prosecuting, Andrews Collings, said it became clear to the officers that she was defending Whillock.

Mr Collings said during the interview the victim became distressed and fled the room. She later returned holding a knife and had taken an overdose of paracetamol.

Her father said this behaviour has continued throughout the case and that his daughter had since taken to

self harming and binge drinking.

She was not present in court.

Before sentencing, Judge Phillip Statman said: "Many indecent image cases regrettably come before this court where the victim of the images remained unidentified, here that is not the case for the images that you have downloaded referred to a pupil where you were deputy head master. "You have committed what, in my judgement, is a very grave breach of trust."

Judge Statman commended the head mistress at The New School, which caters for students with "a wide range of difficulties", for reporting Whillock.



# Beckham shoots and scores with our troops

## Football star is on tour in Afghanistan

■ BY NICK AMES

FORMER England captain David Beckham met with Gurkhas when he visited Camp Bastion in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

He spoke to members of the Kent-based regiment and posed for pictures, as well as taking part in a short ceremony at a religious shrine the Nepalese soldiers have set up on the base.

As a memento of his visit, the soldiers from 1st Battalion Royal Gurkha Rifles presented the former Manchester United and Real Madrid star with a traditional kukri knife.

Beckham, who arrived at Camp Bastion wearing a helmet and body armour, said: "To see the morale of the troops is really incredible. It first hit me on the way over when we were on the military plane flying in to Afghanistan.

"You can see the faces, you can see obviously they know they are leaving their families, but they're so focused and they've got this look in their eyes that they're just so confident and ready. That really is an unbelievable sight to see, and you feel it as well."

His three-day visit, which started on Friday, began with a 7.30am fried breakfast in the cookhouse and included a tour of the camp,



**TAKING AIM:** David Beckham learnt how to handle weapons as part of his tour of Camp Bastion, Afghanistan

which is home to 9,000 British soldiers as well as several hundred other coalition troops

Beckham was shown how to handle weaponry, given a metal detector demonstration and even scored a penalty on a makeshift goal in the sand which had a net constructed from camouflage material.

During the visit Beckham also paid his respects to soldiers who have lost their lives battling the Taliban at the memorial to casualties on the base. On his last day he saw British Army dog teams in action.

Flags of St George were flown even more

than usual at the base for the visit, which was a major boost to morale in a military base where watching football on television is one of the troops' favourite occupations.

Beckham, 35, who is missing the World Cup through injury, said: "Just yesterday one of the troops was killed, and you feel it and you see the flags at half-mast and you feel the tension there. It really is, like I said, amazing to be around but you feel the love from everybody.

"It just really is scary work. These guys are the bravest people I've ever met and it truly is an honour to be here."

## Search for death crash witnesses

A MOTORIST has been charged with causing death by dangerous driving after a biker was killed in a crash.

The male suspect, who is from Kent, has been bailed until August.

The charges relate to the death of a motorcyclist who died at 5.30am on Thursday, May 20.

The male rider, who police say was in his 40s and was not from Kent, was driving a Honda CBR when he was in a collision with a blue Jaguar S Type car near junction five, for Aylesford, on the M20.

The motorcyclist died from severe injuries sustained in the crash.

The coastbound carriageway was closed for more than seven hours for the serious collision investigation unit to scour the scene. Anyone who saw the incident or the vehicles involved is asked to call 01622 798 538.

## Friends attacked on the dancefloor

TWO clubbers were hit in a cowardly attack while on a night out in Maidstone.

The friends were on the dance floor at Liquid and Envy nightclub when a stocky man punched them sometime between 1am and 1.30am on Saturday, May 8. One of the victims, 22, was punched in the face and left with severe injuries to his jaw.

The offender, who was on the phone at the time of the attack, ran off and is believed to have left the Lockmeadow complex as a passenger in a blue Peugeot 106 Cabriolet. Police want to hear from the female driver of the getaway car.

The attacker is about 20 years old, white, 5ft7in, with dark brown spiky hair and was wearing blue jeans and a salmon pink top with a round neck. He has a distinctive tribal tattoo on one arm.

## High pressure win in contest

TEAMS from across the globe descended on Maidstone at the weekend to battle it out at the World Custard Pie Throwing Championships.

More than 50 competitors, some from as far away as Germany and South Africa, took part in the contest on Sunday – held at Coxheath Village Hall.

The 12 teams enjoyed the hot weather as they showed off their best tactics and skills to score the most points – the maximum amount being six points for hitting an opponent in the face.

There was also a chance for competitors to score extra points in a fancy dress competition.

A panel of judges crowned the High Pressure Cleaning Team the winners after they defeated last year's winners and hosts, the Coxheath Till I Pie team, in a tense final round.

The annual free event has been held in Maidstone since 1968 and often attracts hundreds of families to watch and compete.

This year the contest was opened by the new Mayor of Maidstone, Cllr Eric Hotson.

Organisers originally used real custard pies but now make them using a secret recipe to help cut costs and cause less damage to the environment.

## Gurkha band leads troops through town

HUNDREDS of residents lined the streets to cheer on Maidstone's soldiers as they marched through the town centre.

More than 300 families cheered the 150 servicemen from 36 Engineer Regiment, based at the Invicta Barracks off Royal Engineer's Way, who took part in the Civic and Freedom parade on Sunday.

The regiment was led through the town at 11am by the Brigade of Gurkhas Band and followed by civilian contingents, including the new

Maidstone Mayor, Cllr Eric Hotson.

Cllr Hotson said: "It was a fantastic day, the weather was kind and so many people turned out to support our brave soldiers."

As well marking Cllr Hotson's appointment, the parade also has a special focus on the celebration of the town's troops.

The full parade was made up of 20 field squadron, 50 HQ and support squadron, 70 Gurkha field support squadron and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers workshop – linked to the 36 Engineer Regiment.

Also at the event, enjoying the celebrations and sunshine, were a number of dignitaries, the commanding officer of the town's regiment, the Gurkha Major, members of the council and Maidstone and the Weald's newly-elected MP Helen Grant.

Mrs Grant said: "Few people would have been able to hold back a little tear or avoid a lump in the throat as our brave boys marched past.

"It was a really special moment for me personally and I will never forget it. I wanted to salute everyone as they passed and my heart was filled with pride for our soldiers and for the hundreds of townspeople who came out in support for this fantastic parade."



**TAKE PRIDE:** Hundreds lined the street to watch our brave soldiers on the march

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## New area police chief vows to tackle crime in mid Kent on the back of mass day of action

Picture: MAIDSTONE



**NEW APPROACH:** Newly appointed Chief Superintendent Matthew Nix (right) is stepping up patrols (left)

# Mission to make streets safer

MID Kent's new area commander has promised to make the streets safer than ever before as he launches a crackdown on crime.

Newly appointed Chief Superintendent Matthew Nix wants to bring a new approach to policing in Maidstone and Swale by stepping up patrols in a bid to deter offences and build relations with residents.

"Both areas have the same aims and they are something that I have made very clear to all of the staff," he said.

"I have two priorities – improving public confidence by dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matters to people locally, and secondly, reducing anti-social behaviour and crime.

"Every one of my staff has a role to play in delivering these two aims.

"The simple message I want to get across is we are here to serve the public and although mid Kent is already a safe place to work and visit I am determined to make it even safer."

Since accepting his new role about three weeks ago, Ch Sup Nix has launched a number of initiatives to deter crime in Maidstone, Sittingbourne, Sheerness and Faversham.

A special mid Kent day of action, held last Wednesday, saw more than 100 officers, from all ranks, arrest 15 suspected offenders following a series of raids and stop searches.

The majority of those arrested were linked to drug offences which fuels existing speculation that the area has an ongoing drug issue – something Ch Sup Nix argues.

■ BY ANNA WHITE

He said: "When mid Kent is compared to other places in the country we do not have a drug problem, but where it is taking place in the area we will deal with it.

"Those types of crimes that have an adverse impact on the public's quality of life are a priority."

He also defended the operation from comments made by readers who think all ranks of officers should be on the street the majority of the time.

"What people didn't see was we still had the neighbourhood officers present and that will continue. We brought in additional resources for the special day of action.

"Police and staff have to undertake a range of roles and we are looking to increase the number of police out on the streets."

He promised residents would see more days of action in the near future.

Ch Sup Nix also brings a personal touch to the role of area commander as he currently lives in Maidstone and worked with the force in Sittingbourne and Faversham for more than 12 years.

The father-of-three feels his background with mid Kent will benefit the residents.

He said: "I think the fact I live in Maidstone helps us provide a better quality service that is personal.

"I have been talking to my staff and they share my pride in working for mid Kent."

Ch Sup Nix succeeds former area commander Alasdair Hope and is now responsible for more than 700 members of staff.

## Fifteen arrested in police action day

A TEENAGE schoolboy was one of 15 suspected yobs to be arrested in a special day of action across mid Kent.

The 14-year-old was arrested for suspicion of possession of class B drugs after police found a stash of herbal cannabis and amphetamine paste during a raid at a flat in Parkwood Parade.

Four other suspects found in the flat, an 18-year-old woman, a 19-year-old man, a 21-year-old man and a 43-year-old woman, were also arrested and have all been released on bail pending further inquiries.

The warrant was executed on Wednesday, May 19, as part of an operation to tackle anti-social behaviour and crime in Maidstone, Sittingbourne, Faversham and Sheerness.

More than 100 officers from various ranks, including senior members of the force, detectives and office staff, were involved in the initiative.

Of the 15 suspected offenders arrested, ten were caught in Maidstone and five are from Swale.

Three men were arrested following a raid at an address in Knightrider Street, in the town centre, where two suspicious items were found by officers.

Two of the men, aged 27 and 45, were released on bail until May 26, but a 21-year-old was charged with robbery and appeared at Maidstone Magistrates on Thursday.

Dean Walter, of Knightrider Street, was released on conditional bail and ordered to appear at Maidstone Crown Court on Friday, June 4.

A warrant was executed at a house in Willington where police seized cannabis, tablets and a suspected stolen generator.

Resident Roy Carr, 36, has been charged with possession of a class C drug and is due to appear in front of magistrates on Tuesday, June 8.

Officers also carried out a stop search on an 18-year-old man in Sandling Park and discovered a bladed article. He received a caution.

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## Initiative drives home car safety

HUNDREDS of DIY shoppers had their cars made secure from potential thieves in a police initiative.

More than 300 drivers stopped at Wickes in Maidstone to have their numbers plate fitted with anti-tamper screws for free.

The special screws aim to tackle a nationwide problem where plates are stolen and then cloned by criminals, potentially leaving the victim open to speeding fines, congestion charges and other offences.

Crime reduction officer for Maidstone, John Grant, said: "Victims of this kind of crime might not be aware until penalty charge tickets arrive on the doormat.

"You then have the difficulty and



**SAFE:** Police fit plates with anti-tamper screws inconvenience of convincing the authorities that it was not your car.

"Having these screws fitted is a simple measure to reduce the risk that your number plate will be targeted."

The event, held at the DIY store in St Peter's Street on Tuesday, May 18, is part of an ongoing scheme led by members of the community safety partnership.

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# yourlocalinterview

## QUESTION & ANSWER

### EMMA RANSLEY



**Q** Tell us a bit about yourself and what you do.

**A** I am the sales manager for the Best Western-run Russell Hotel in Maidstone, although I live on the coast in Folkestone. I have worked within the travel and leisure industry for 12 or so years.

**Q** What does your role at the Russell Hotel involve?

**A** My job involves the proactive selling of the hotel either by face-to-face appointments, networking, agency visits, exhibitions or telephone.

I am also in charge of all marketing activity including the designing of promotional printed literature, maintaining, updating and analysing the website and social media such as Twitter and Facebook.

**Q** What do you enjoy most about your job?

**A** I am very lucky to be working with a great bunch of people who are passionate about the hotel and who thrive on ensuring each and every guest receives the best treatment.

All Best Western hotels are individually owned and operated, which enables me to successfully negotiate rates and tailor make events to people's requirements without a 'corporate head office' implementing their own rules, which may not be suitable for a small, friendly hotel.

**Q** Are there any downsides to your role or working in the hotel industry overall?

**A** The unsociable hours can be a grind at times. Living in Folkestone and having to be at a breakfast meeting in Maidstone for 7am means getting up at the crack of dawn. However, networking is a fun part of the job and very rewarding so it has its positive side.

**Q** Have you always wanted to be involved in the hotel industry?

**A** I studied teacher training with performing arts at university with the aim of appearing in the West End. I was lucky to work in the industry until I was in my mid 20s and then became entertainments manager for a tour operator. As I spent more time travelling I decided I wanted something with more stability so ended up where I am today.

**Q** What makes the hotel unique from others in the Maidstone area?

**A** We are the only hotel in Maidstone to have landscaped gardens and sun terraces making us an excellent choice for weddings and we are also pleased to be the only Maidstone hotel with a silver Green Tourism Award.

**Q** Tell us about the services available to guests.

**A** We have 42 en-suite bedrooms including two suites and five conference and ban-

queting suites. We are suitable for those one-to-one meetings or conferences for up to 300 delegates. We also have our beautiful Garden Restaurant and bar, our gardens plus free wifi.

**Q** The hotel is near the town centre, does your location help attract business?

**A** We are very lucky to be situated where we are, less than a mile from the M20 and Maidstone East train station plus for those local to the town centre we are close enough for them to walk. It's a little oasis for those who want a relaxing atmosphere for any meetings, conferences or events.

**Q** The hotel has held various political-related events, such as a hustings with the Maidstone and Weald parliamentary candidates and a Conservative business event last year. Is there any special link between the hotel and politics?

**A** Not that I am aware of. But we do host a wide variety of events in our conference rooms including political ones, such as the Conservative meeting with Theresa May MP.

**Q** How can customers get in touch to find out more information or to book a room?

**A** Call our friendly reception team on 01622 692221, go to our website at [www.therussellhotel.com](http://www.therussellhotel.com) or email us at [info@therussellhotel.com](mailto:info@therussellhotel.com).

Alternatively follow us on Twitter @RussellHotel for special offers throughout the year.

**Q & A**

The Best Western sales manager based at the Russell Hotel in Maidstone talks to **Anna White** about her route into the leisure industry, the services offered by the hotel, and how it differs from others in the area

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**WANTED:** Police have released e-fits of the pair

## Do you recognise suspected thieves?

POLICE have released images of two suspected robbers who targeted a teenage boy in an alleyway.

The male offenders, who are in their late teens, stopped the 16-year-old as he walked through the passageway between Buckland Road and Buckland Lane on Tuesday, May 4.

They threatened the victim and then stole his Sony Eriksson mobile phone.

Detective sergeant Darren Ryder, who is investigating the incident, said: "We are taking the unusual step of releasing these two e-fits in the hope that someone may recognise them."

"Alternatively, those pictured may wish to come forward and rule themselves out of our inquiries."

"We take any reports of robbery seriously and have set up a dedicated team, headed by myself to deal with violent crime offences and ensure that victims of this crime receive a professional and supportive service."

"I would like members of the public to study these images and if they recognise the men to contact myself on 01622 604 226."

# Homeless to get helping hand with new initiative

■ BY ANNA WHITE

CHARITY workers hope a new partnership will help rid the streets of homeless-related crimes.

Kent-based organisation Porchlight has joined forces with Maidstone council to tackle rough sleeping, street drinking, drug use and illegal busking.

The teams will patrol the hotspots in the town to assist homeless people access support for housing, health, finance and specialist drug and alcohol treatments.

Gill Bryant, strategic area manager for the charity's outreach service, hopes the initiative will ultimately improve life for the whole community.

She said: "A core part of Porchlight's work is to strengthen communities. The expertise of the street population workers will not only help rebuild vulnerable people's lives, but also improve the community for everyone who lives in Maidstone."

"We understand the variety of issues faced by vulnerable and single homeless people and we are there to tackle them on an individual basis."

Ms Bryant would also like the whole community to be involved in the project.

She added: "We really want the public to become involved. Our team regularly go out early in the morning to try and engage with



**SUPPORT:** Cllr Malcolm Greer is delighted the council has joined with Porchlight to help the community's homeless

rough sleepers and with extra intelligence from the public we can really help more people."

The scheme is funded as part of the government's strategy to end rough sleeping in England by 2012.

Maidstone council's cabinet member for regeneration, councillor Malcolm Greer, said: "We had an opportunity to bid for additional resources with Porchlight and we were delighted when the government recognised the strength of this bid and provided the funding."

"We identified that Maidstone has a unique older street homeless population that we aim to help and offer solutions to enable them to come off the street and back into the community."

According to figures obtained by the council, there are 28 residents currently registered on the rough sleeper list. The rough sleeper list gives the council an indication of how many people are on the streets but does not mean they sleep in the open every night.

There are two shelters in the town – Maidstone Day Centre, in Lily Smith House, Knighttrider Street, which has 42 bed spaces and Trinity Foyer, in Church Street, which caters for homeless youngsters and also has 42 beds.

If you are homeless or a resident concerned about a rough sleeper on the streets, you can contact Porchlight's Kent Outreach Service on 0800 567 7699 or visit [www.porchlight.org.uk](http://www.porchlight.org.uk)

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# History was being made before my eyes

THE night of the first leaders' debate in Manchester was just about the most surreal of my life.

The debate itself took place in Granada Studios, a few hundred yards down the road from the plush surroundings of the Hilton Hotel – home to 'Spin Alley' – which is where I spent the evening.

This was a vast, high-ceilinged, wood-panelled chamber with a huge cinema screen at one end, in front of two dozen rows of desks where the hundred-odd hacks from national and international newspapers and broadcasters tapped away ferociously at their laptops.

At the back of the room, scaffolding was set up for the BBC, ITV and Sky News to broadcast from, and space for the reporters to hobnob with politicians and spin doctors while TV and radio producers scuttled around.

I was there as part of the Lib Dem team, my main task being to negotiate my way round the room with the now Energy and Climate Change Secretary Chris Huhne, mingling with the journos, making sure he was in the right place for the Newsnight, Skys and 5 Lives, and discussing the night's star turn by Nick Clegg.

We watched the debate on a flat-screen TV in our private green room behind the main chamber, alongside Paddy Ashdown, Vince Cable, Danny Alexander and colleagues from the press office, chewing tiny egg and cress sandwiches and processed ham wraps.

To be honest, it was hard to keep any real sense of perspective as the debate went on.

There was much pacing around and whispering in ears, as well as the odd cheer and applause when Nick came out with a great line or a well-made argument. As it went on, we all had the sense that Nick was doing well – we were watching the ITV 'worm', the online polls and the reaction on Twitter – but what did people watching at home think?

## Plaudits

Nick, despite all the plaudits that came his way following his performance, started with a huge disadvantage. The Liberal Democrats, to put it bluntly, didn't have the luxury of being able to import expensive advisers from the Obama campaign, or any other, as Labour and the Tories did.

Nick's preparation, in which I played only a minor part, was carried out very much in-house and from scratch.

But it seemed to work. As the debate drew to a close, we prepared to head back to Spin Alley to put our side of events across to the journalists and broadcasters in the hope it would be reflected in the instant coverage and the following morning's papers.

The room, which had been crowded, but relatively quiet before the debate, was now a full-blown media circus.

Everywhere you looked there were secretaries of state, Alastair Campbells and Charlie Whelans, George Osbornes and William Hagues, surrounded by crowds half-a-dozen deep of cameramen and hacks scribbling away in shorthand and shouting their questions.

We were surrounded as we entered and it was clear from the first questions that people had seen the debate the same way we had. Nick Clegg had won, and won convincingly. This was reinforced as the first instant polls flooded in, which spread through the room in a mass game of Chinese whispers. All of a sudden, Peter Mandelson wafted into the room.

A huge huddle enveloped him – all camera lenses, raised hands and shrieked fragments of questions. For a few minutes he held them all rapt as he repeated his pre-prepared line – that Clegg had won on style, but Brown on substance – then he wafted away as quickly as he had arrived.

As the mêlée continued I found myself



Two years ago reporter PHIL REILLY left KOS Media for his dream job – to be a press officer at Liberal Democrat HQ. A passionate supporter of the party, even he did not foresee the General Election would produce a Cabinet with five Lib Dem members. Here, he gives an exclusive behind-the-scenes account of the first televised leaders' debate that started the handwagon which ended with Nick Clegg as Deputy PM

barged by Cabinet ministers, glared at by opposition spin doctors, gossiping with BBC correspondents and shooting the breeze with Theresa May's aide as we waited for our charges to finish debating on Newsnight.

Soon enough the print journalists wrapped up, their copy filed, and headed, presumably, for the hotels and bars of central Manchester.

The broadcasters continued their work for another hour or two, but slowly the number of people milling around behind them dwindled and everyone went their separate ways. It was all quite a lot to take in.

For two years leading up to this point, my job had been to fight for every scrap of coverage

possible for the Lib Dems in newspapers and on television. The media is used to seeing everything as a tug-of-war between Labour and the Tories, especially with the prospect of a close election and a change of government looming, so airtime and column inches were hard to come by. In an hour and a half of primetime television all that changed, and as the evening progressed that fact slowly dawned on me.

As we packed away our laptops in the green room afterwards Paddy Ashdown came in to congratulate us all. But he also sounded a note of caution, warning us that Nick's success would make him a target as never before.

Despite this, my press office colleagues and I

stumbled our way back to the nearby Premier Inn at around midnight, excitedly trying to read the next day's front pages on BlackBerries and iPhones.

What happened in the days and weeks that followed – 'Cleggmania', the bizarre 'Clegg in Nazi Slur on Britain' headlines, the two further debates, the press conferences, the round-the-clock campaigning, the journalists and photographers camped outside the office, election night and the disappointment that the surge subsided as people's pencils hovered over the ballot papers, the 'big, open and comprehensive offer', the days and nights of negotiations with the Conservatives and Labour, the coalition agreement, the announcement of Cabinet posts and the special conference – all passed so quickly that now it all seems one long blur.

I've barely had a full night's sleep since the campaign began, so it's hard to take stock of it all right now. It has been the most full-on, exhilarating and exhausting experience of my life. Now, of course, comes the governing.

I don't suppose it's going to get much easier.

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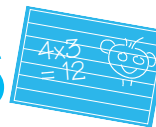
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## DJ students in da house

THREE musical students have become the first youngsters to complete a recognised course to become a DJ.

Three Year 11 pupils at Holmesdale Technology College, in Snodland, learned how to mix records and discovered the performance skills needed by modern DJs.

The teenagers, Kalen Drain (pictured above), Tom Long and Simon Harris, spent hours practising hand and ear co-ordination and self-discipline to achieve the standard of their musical heroes.

Once they had perfected their talents, they took to the school stage where they each performed a 15-minute live set using specialist DJ decks and software.

Holmesdale's teacher of music technology, Michael Craig, was impressed by all three performances and thinks they could give some of the world's top DJs a run for their money.

Their classmates also had the opportunity to hear their talents on the school radio station – HTC Radio.

Now DJ Kalen, DJ Tee and DJ SimZ have had a taste of fame behind the decks they now want to pursue professional careers in their favourite subject.

# Students come out on top after Army challenge day

■ BY MATHEW BEECH

YOUNG recruits from across the county were put to the test during an Army challenge day.

More than 70 youngsters completed a gruelling series of tasks at the Sir John Moore Barracks in Folkestone, under the watchful gaze of serving soldiers.

The day saw public uniformed service students from MidKent College in Medway and Maidstone and sixth formers from the Howard School in Rainham take on a number of demanding physical and mental activities.

They were marked on challenges including observation, casualty evacuation and laser clay shooting and also tried their hand at an imposing assault course.

MidKent College's Medway team were scored as the best unit, and also saw off their competitors in the tug-of-war competition.

MidKent College student Lauren Bremner said: "I have always wanted to join the Army and today has allowed me to get a real taste of Army life. I particularly enjoyed the observation and casualty tasks and having my fitness levels tested."

The 16-year-old has signed up to the Army's bursary scheme, a financial support initiative aimed at youngsters planning to enrol after college.

Financial rewards are available once they have completed their courses and also once they have finished their Army basic training.

Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Hall, commander of regional recruiting, said: "The day was



**BATTLE CONDITIONS:** The recruits take part in an evacuation test, above, and right, taking the strain in the end-of-day tug of war, won by MidKent College Medway

geared towards those students who have expressed an interest in joining the Army.

"It was a tremendous success and the feedback we have had from each of the participating colleges has been extremely positive.

"We hope that the students who attended the challenge will now go on to attend further awareness days."



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# Fears plans to rebuild schools will be ditched

■ BY MARIJKE COX

A BILLION pound project which would see every secondary school in the county rebuilt or refurbished could be scrapped under the new Government's plans.

Ten of the 36 planned schools have started construction work and have contracts to finish the buildings, but the future could look bleak for the majority of Kent and Medway's secondary schools.

The celebrated Building Schools for the Future (BSF) project was introduced by Labour in 2005-06, in a bid to improve every secondary centre in the country.

And with Kent's overall BSF programme – the largest building scheme in Europe – worth an estimated £1.8 billion, County Hall officials believed it could transform 21st century education.

Last September, Tory Kent County Council leader Paul Carter praised the new schools initiative, stating it would give the county's young people first-class facilities.

But after the Con-Lib coalition took over government, spending plans under BSF – £55bn nationally – look set for review, with fears funding could be massively reduced.

Education chiefs are worried some of the cash outlined for the BSF programme could be used on academies – which are state-funded, but established and managed by sponsors – as well as the Tories' proposed 'free schools'.

These free schools would be state-funded, but set up by private organisations or parent and teacher groups to compete with state schools in a bid to drive up standards.

Despite initial praise from Cllr Carter for BSF, he told this newspaper he agreed with new education secretary Michael Gove, who called for a review of the scheme.

Cllr Carter said: "Whichever party came into government it's most unlikely we would have had the same amount of money due to spending cuts that need to be made. I'm expecting a cut of 25-35 per cent for BSF."

## Competition

Two weeks before the General Election Cllr Carter revealed his fears to the BBC over the free schools policy and academies, claiming they could threaten the local schools' budgets.

But he retracted his comments, claiming he was 100 per cent behind the then-shadow education secretary Michael Gove's plans.

He told KOS Media this week: "There is no disagreement between myself and Mr Gove."

"As long as there is fair competition and fair funding across the board, I think it's good to introduce some competition between schools."

But school heads not yet to sign contracts under the BSF programme fear if the scheme is scrapped they may not get their much-needed refurbishments.

Already £500m has been secured in Kent from Partnership for Schools, which is responsible for government's capital investment projects.

Andrew Somers is headteacher of



**UNDER CONSTRUCTION:** Work on some of the 36 new-look secondary schools is under way, or even finished

Hartsdown Technology College in Margate, one of the schools in the second wave of BSF without a signed contract.

"It would be a massive disappointment if it doesn't go ahead," he said.

"It would put us at a huge disadvantage against schools that have been refurbished. We can't deliver the new curriculum without these facilities."

"We're in one of the most deprived areas in Kent. Our school was built in the 1950s with flat roofs which leak – the sports hall roof cost £45,000 to repair."

"Without repairs we'd have to struggle on, but it's unfair on the pupils and staff."

Just down the road from Hartsdown is St George's CofE Foundation School in Broadstairs, one of the first to be completed under the BSF programme.

Headteacher Kim Stoner said the rebuild was "inspiring", with £1 million of ICT facilities and new open learning areas.

"This is the start of a new future for the school where everybody can realise their aspirations," she said.

Although Mrs Stoner would not comment on the possible axing of BSF funding, she admitted it would be disappointing for any schools to miss out.

Kent independent education advisor Peter Read echoed her words and said he would be furious if funding for BSF was cut with academies and free schools going ahead.

He said: "We are in a government financial crisis. I can understand the reduction in BSF, but to continue vast funding for academies while other schools in poor conditions are not being repaired is unforgivable. Funding for a new academy is more expensive at around £35m, whereas a BSF school is £20m."

"But Michael Gove sees it that if he scraps BSF and supports academies and free schools he still saves money."

Mr Read also hit out at the free schools policy, stating the centres would only benefit middle-class areas.

"Who is going to set up a school in a deprived area? And yet these are the places in greatest need," he said.

A statement from Partnership for Schools stated the Department for Education had not yet made a decision on BSF funding, but admitted the Government would be undertaking a full comprehensive spending review.

"Ministers will shortly be considering their spending priorities, which will take into account all areas of spending, including schools capital."

Picture: ANDRIAN KETTEL



## Endangered purple herons find sanctuary

A NESTING pair of purple herons have set up home in Dungeness – the first time in the UK.

The striking birds breed in southern Europe and visit the UK in small numbers each year.

But the nesting pair on the Dungeness peninsula are set to be the first to lay eggs and raise young in the country.

The RSPB has set up a round-the-clock guard to protect the birds, with the help of Kent Police.

Samantha Dawes, the RSPB's conservation manager in the South East, said: "Purple herons are high up on the list of birds that we expect to see setting up home in southern Britain as the changing climate pushes them further north."

Meanwhile the RSPB says the Dungeness nature reserve is under threat by the proposed expansion of Lydd airport – claims strongly denied by airport chiefs.



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# your letters



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## YOUR LETTERS

### MP takes maternity issue to parliament

After a dramatic first week in Westminster, seeing the first coalition government being formed since World War Two, I have got to work on the big issues.

The first item on my action list was the maternity campaign and my first action as MP was to write to the new Secretary of State for Health, the Rt Hon Andrew Lansley, to arrange a meeting.

I met with Andrew prior to the election and he agreed to a meeting with me and Glenn Douglas, the Chief Executive of Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust, to discuss their planned reconfiguration of the maternity services between Maidstone and Pembury Hospitals. I will follow up my letter to Andrew by tabling a written question to Parliament about the issue on May 25.

I also made sure I met with newly appointed Health Minister Anne Milton MP to progress the matter on Thursday, May 13 during my first week in Parliament.

I have been fighting the decision to downgrade Maidstone's maternity as a member of the successful cross-party MASH team since 2008. The issue was referred to the Secretary of State by a Kent County Council scrutiny committee in March 2010 and was referred to the Independent Reconfiguration Panel for review.

It is not yet known how far their review has progressed.

**Helen Grant**  
MP for Maidstone and the Weald, by email



### A progressive tax system is needed

In its anxiety about the deficit, the new coalition is determined to make short and long-term cuts in public spending.

However, these cuts and their impact upon Kent and Medway can be avoided.

The Government can easily avoid making damaging cuts in public services, which would reduce employment all over Kent.

It can start by addressing how £100 billion in the UK each year of tax revenue is lost through tax loopholes, failure to collect taxes due and non-payment of taxes.

Staff cuts in HM Revenue and Customs are also preventing proper collection of taxes.

If a progressive tax system is adopted in addition to more efficient tax collection, then the deficit can be reduced significantly during the next five years.

If such measures are not taken, the current rise in unemployment in Kent and Medway will not be reversed. Similarly, our needs for more social housing, better public transport, improved health

## your blogger

Each week we get a mystery writer to air their views on living in and around Maidstone...



### THE tragic suicide of Vicky Harrison has been much in the news.

Despite having ten GCSEs, A-C, and three A-levels, she was unable to find a job despite applying for 200 positions. Sad? Yes. But understandable, perhaps.

Recently, a maths exercise book that had been used by the Prince of Wales at Gordonstoun in 1963, when he was 14 came to light. The Prince failed his maths O-level first time, but passed the following year. A pass at O-level was equivalent to a C or better at GCSE today.

The book was assessed by a professor at Plymouth University without knowledge of the owner's name. He commented that the level was at least an A grade today, with some of it now being in the A-level syllabus. And this without the aid of calculators or computers.

This disparity raises some pertinent questions as to the value of modern qualifications. If a scraped pass in 1965 would now be rated at least grade A, what is the real level of grades B and C?

Come to that, how would modern A-levels compare in standard with those of more than 40 years ago?

At the time Prince Charles was at school, I attended a direct-grant grammar school – an independent school that received a grant for accepting the brightest pupils from state primaries. The academic level was very high. Despite that, no pupil took more than 8 or 9 O-levels, or three A-levels. By no means all of those went to university. Nowadays, ten or more GCSEs are not uncommon, nor are four A-levels.

If there is a story in your area you think we should be covering contact the news editor, **Simon Robinson**, on 01303 817185 or email him on the details above. If you want to be the next Maidstone blogger then all you have to do is submit an article to us (of around 550 words) and email it to the editor. And don't forget, for all the latest news and video from your town log-on to [www.yourmaidstone.co.uk](http://www.yourmaidstone.co.uk).

promotion, upgraded local government services and expanding higher education will not be met.

**Steve Dawe, Kent Green Party, by email**

### Lend your support to free innocent Bill

I would like to thank your readers who have already pledged their support to help free my husband, Bill Shaw (pictured), a former British Army major, who has been wrongfully convicted of corruption in Afghanistan and jailed for two years. Bill is an honourable man who has served the British people and was awarded the MBE for his work in the Royal Military Police. He's a real family man – father of three and grandfather of two.

He believed he was making a legitimate payment to Afghan officials after his company's (G4S) vehicles were impounded by a unit of the Afghan government. Bill repeatedly requested a receipt at the time of payment but none was given.

He carried out the payment in good faith and transparently, to the extent that it was documented and approved in accordance with his company's procedures.

Bill was sentenced on April 26 and is now in a Kabul prison where Taliban are also held. For a British Army veteran this is unacceptable:



for an innocent man it is absolutely monstrous. The charges against Bill were totally misconceived and not proven in court – he is innocent.

His family are campaigning for Bill's release by calling on the Afghan and British authorities to help us urgently overturn this patently unfair judgment. We're asking people to register their support by signing the 'petitiononline.com' (William Shaw MBE), or at Facebook (Free Bill Shaw), or Twitter (@freebillshaw). The more people who show their support, the better our chances of righting this terrible injustice.

**Liz Shaw (Bill's wife), address supplied**

### Mixed response to planning changes

The new coalition Government has announced changes they plan to make to the planning system. Here is Protect Kent's view on how this may affect us in Kent.

\*"We will rapidly abolish regional spatial strategies and return decision-making powers on housing and planning to local councils, including giving councils new powers to stop 'garden grabbing'."

Getting rid of the South East Plan will remove a lot of housing targets across Kent, but could undermine regeneration efforts in places like Ashford, Dover, Sittingbourne and Dartford.

Protect Kent feels the good news

is that it will take away the policy support for railfreight depots like KIG and kill off the BIG freight depot proposed for Wrotham, Platt and Borough Green.

'Garden Grabbing' has been a bane in West Kent in particular where gardens have been sold off and packed with houses and even apartment blocks.

\* In the longer term, we will radically reform the planning system to give neighbourhoods far more ability to determine the shape of the places in which their inhabitants live, based on the principles set out in the Conservative Party publication 'Open Source Planning'.

It will be interesting to see how this pans out. The uncertainty that all this will cause will slow down a lot of planning processes.

\* "We will abolish the unelected Infrastructure Planning Commission and replace it with an efficient and democratically accountable system that provides a fast-track process for major infrastructure projects."

We campaigned vociferously against the IPC. We still need to keep an eye on how this develops.

\* "We will publish and present to Parliament a simple and consolidated national planning framework covering all forms of development and setting out national economic, environmental and social priorities."

This sounds great but we are concerned it could turn out to be more complicated. We do, however,

fully support the next point:

\* "We will maintain the Green Belt, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and other environmental protections, and create a new designation to protect green areas of importance to local communities."

"We will explore a range of measures to bring empty homes into use."

We feel this is a good thing. A big chunk of the housing shortage could be addressed by bringing back into use the tens of thousands of houses lying empty. Unfortunately the next point could be very damaging:

\* "We will promote 'Home on the Farm' schemes that encourage farmers to convert existing buildings into affordable housing."

"We will create new trusts that will make it simpler for communities to provide homes for local people."

This sounds good, but the detail may create more problems.

\* "We will introduce new powers to help communities save local facilities and services threatened with closure, and give communities the right to bid to take over local state-run services."

This sounds good. Post Office closures caused a lot of problems in rural communities in Kent.

\* "We will require continuous improvements to the energy efficiency of new housing."

Protect Kent questions exactly what this means. Either increasing building standards over time or that once built new houses should become more energy efficient? The below point is equally as vague:

"We will provide incentives for local authorities to deliver sustainable development, including for new homes and businesses."

**Sean Furey, Deputy director Protect Kent**  
By email



### Answer needed for question of faith

I would like to comment on two letters in Yourmaidstone (Wednesday, May 5).

I agree in part with Ian Macmillan but totally disagree with Phil Granger, who asks the Bishop of Dover, the Rt Rev Trevor Willmott, to put his faith in God!

I would just like to ask both, and others who believe in God: If God made man, who made God? Any sane person knows everything has a beginning and an end.

Please don't respond with the same old clichéd answers.

**John R O'Neon, Folkestone, by email**



## Absenteeism target

ABSENCE rates have a direct correlation with how Kent's secondary schools fare in Ofsted inspections, according to new figures.

Of the four secondary schools currently rated "inadequate" in the county, three are among the ten worst for persistent absence.

The figures were revealed in a report to members of Kent County Council's learning and development policy overview and scrutiny committee.

Councillors were also told Kent had reached its target of no more than 5.5 per cent persistent absence a year early.

Rates of overall absenteeism have shown a year-on-year decrease from 8.19 per cent in 2006/07 to 7.63 per cent in 2008/09, which is still higher than the national average of 7.21 per cent.

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Organisers discuss Canterbury Climate Fair. Search 'climate'

# KCC's scrutiny overhaul sees monthly accounts

■ BY STEVE KNIGHT

KENT County Council has agreed to open itself up to greater scrutiny by publishing details of its monthly accounts.

The move comes just weeks after Liberal Democrat councillors accused the ruling Conservative administration of being opposed to transparency over what it spends taxpayers' money on.

However, cabinet member for finance Cllr John Simmonds said it was something he had planned to do for some time.

"We've been working on it for a year or so," he said. "It's nothing new. The runes were there and we knew it was something both Labour and the Tories wanted nationally, so we would have been stupid to bury our heads in the sand only to then panic when it was forced upon us."

Prime Minister David Cameron has already said he intends to make it a statutory duty for local authorities to publish much more information about how public money is spent by councils.

Cllr Simmonds revealed that KCC is to develop proposals on how to publish regular accounts of its spending and that it wants to implement them within a year.

However, he said the information needed to be



**BANK ON IT:** Greater transparency about KCC's use of taxpayers' money will lead to monthly accounts relevant enough to warrant the time and money spent on providing it.

He said: "The problem I have is that in the '£500 or more' category, we're talking about 300,000 entries per year or almost 6,000 per week."

"If you toss this amount of information into the ether, who is going to look at it and will it be meaningful?"

"We want it to have some purpose. We don't

want to throw it all out there just so we can say 'aren't we good'.

"Already with the Freedom of Information Act we receive a lot of spurious requests that are expensive to run and you're never quite sure where the individual is going with it. That's money that can be spent in better ways."

KCC came under fire last month when it was revealed that during 2008/09 County Hall had more senior officers earning in excess of £100,000 a year than any local authority in the UK.

The council also refused to name who was earning what and Cllr Simmonds said that would not change when it starts to publish monthly accounts.

He added: "I think we're going to have to provide details of people's salaries. I don't mind releasing job titles, but I hope we won't have to identify individuals."

"I doubt there are many people who would like everyone to know how much they earn."

Last month, Lib Dems accused the Tories of snubbing their request to discuss ways of publishing the council's expenses.

However, Lib Dem group leader Cllr Trudy Dean welcomed Cllr Simmonds' statements, despite his refusal to discuss the plans in public.

She said: "It's a shame he's chosen to do it in one of the committees that is private."

"It's chaired by me, I'll give him that, but if we're looking at the principles of transparency, then why can't it be held in public?"

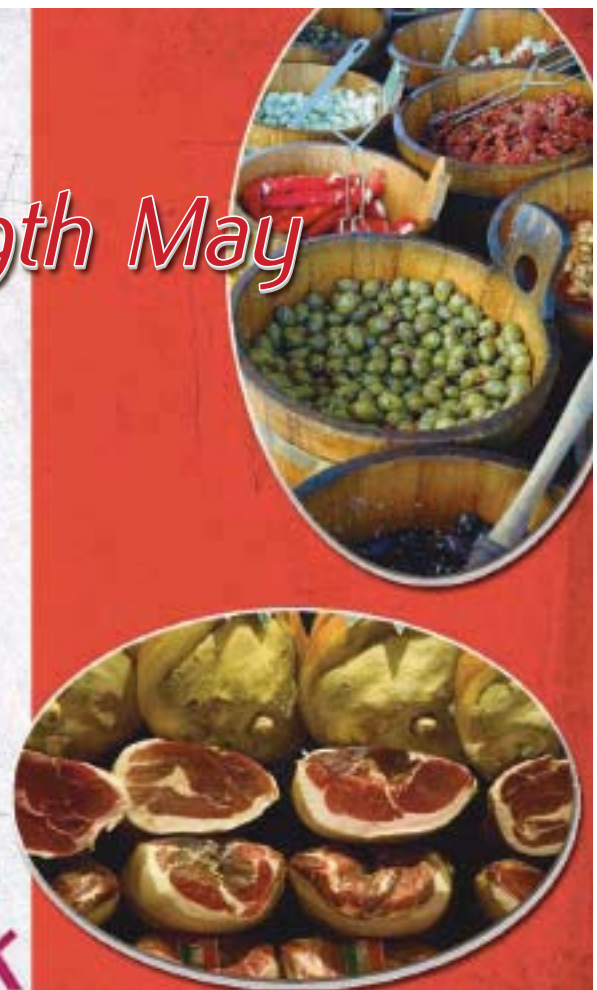
## Italian Market Friday 28th & Saturday 29th May

A taste of Italy is coming to Fremlin Walk Maidstone this weekend as the centre holds another of its popular Italian Markets. Stalls filled with traditional cheeses, breads, cured meats, olives and oils will line Fremlin Walk as food lovers are treated to a mouth watering array of traditional Italian produce. Shoppers will be able to choose from fresh pastas, famous meats, hot dishes and an irresistible selection of dolci e biscotti, Italy's famed cakes and biscuits.



**fremlin walk**

[www.fremlinwalk.co.uk](http://www.fremlinwalk.co.uk)





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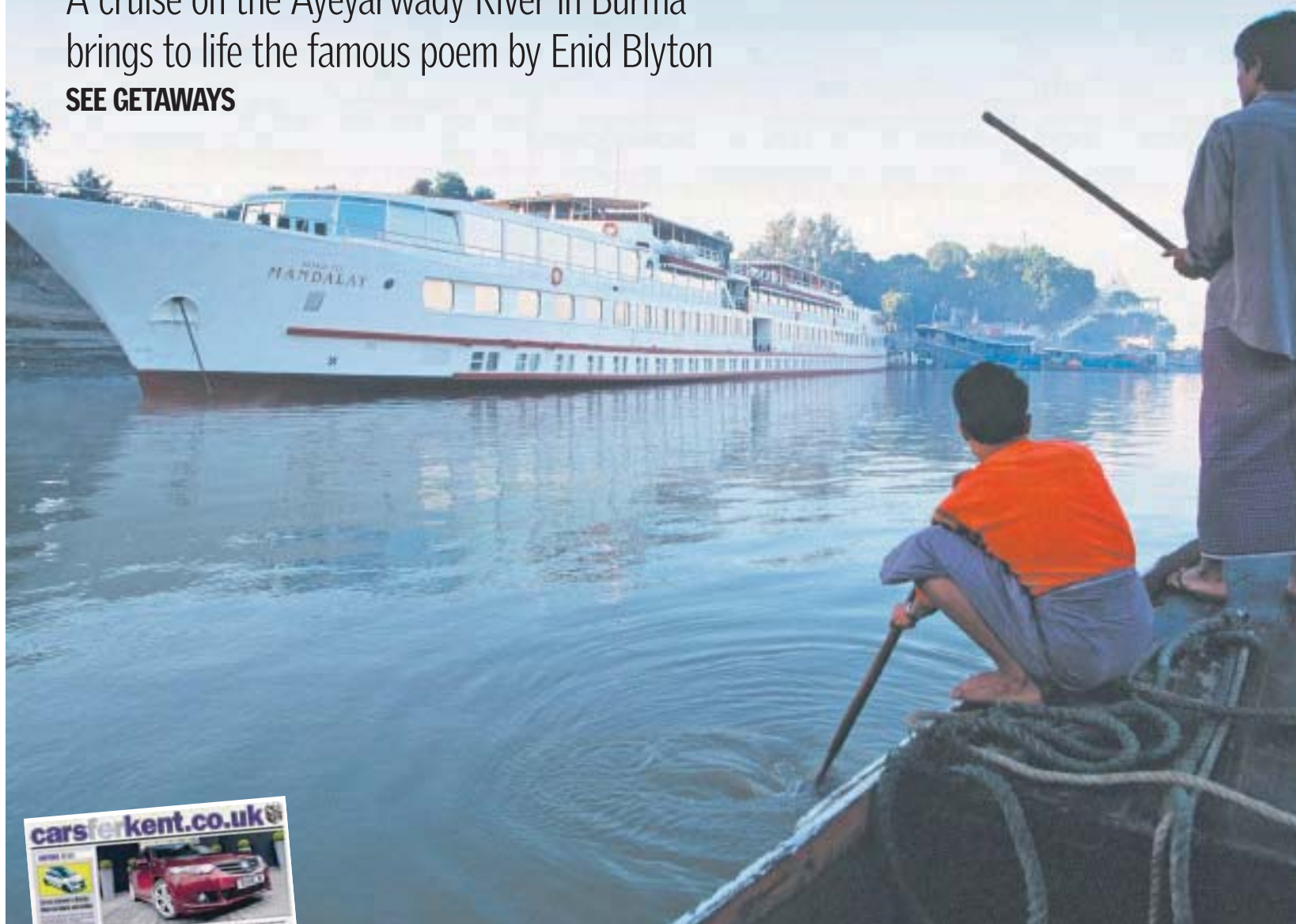


# your lifestyle

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brings to life the famous poem by Enid Blyton

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## DAY & NIGHT

### Romance in the house

A ROMANTIC tryst descends into farce in Diana Raffle's *Round the Houses*.

An estate agent's plans to use his client's house for an amorous meeting are dashed by a motley crew of unwanted guests. *Round the Houses* runs at the Avenue Theatre, Sittingbourne, from Wednesday to Friday. Tickets cost £6. To book call 01795 471140.

### Discover African jazz

DISCOVER the Afro-European jazz sound of the Carmen Souza Quartet on Friday.

The band mixes traditional African and Cape Verde rhythms with contemporary influences to produce poignant and inspiring songs. The quartet are at the Exchange Studio in Maidstone at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £9/£7 or £22 for families. To book call 01622 758611 or visit [www.hazlittartscentre.co.uk](http://www.hazlittartscentre.co.uk).

### Church's final concert

THE Bechstein Duo gives the last in the current series of concerts at St Matthew's Church in Wigmore.

Pianist Rachel Thomas and local flautist Andrew Thomas will perform at 7.30pm on Saturday. Tickets cost £7. To book call 01634 372508, email [mattconcerts@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mattconcerts@hotmail.co.uk) or write to 42 The Goldings, Rainham ME8 0AX. Tickets are free for young people and students but must be reserved.

### Toddlers' free day out

FAMILIES can enjoy a day out for less at Kent Life in Maidstone now that children under four go free.

Admission costs £8.50/£7.50 for adults and £6.50 for children. To find out more call 01622 763936 or visit [www.kentlife.org.uk](http://www.kentlife.org.uk).

### Command performance

TWO remarkable artists perform together at the Command House in Chatham tonight.

Vocalist Sarah Gillespie teams up with saxophonist Gilad Atzmon at the venue in Dock Road. The concert starts at 8pm and tickets cost £5. Find out more online at [www.myspace.com/giladatmon](http://www.myspace.com/giladatmon).

### Walk through history

LEARN about the history of Shorne Woods Country Park in Gravesend on a guided walk along the Heritage Trail.

A Walk Through Time, part of the Gravesham Heritage Festival, starts at 11am on Sunday and finishes at 1pm. Tickets cost £2. To book call Virginie Whittaker on 01474 337600 or email [virginie.whittaker@gravesham.gov.uk](mailto:virginie.whittaker@gravesham.gov.uk).

### Rare pair pool talents

FOLK stars Dave Cousins and Ian Cutler make a rare appearance together at Chatham's Brook Theatre on Tuesday.

Dave Cousins leads the famous Strawbs and Cutler's fiddle has been heard with The Bully Wee Band and Feast of Fiddles.

The concert starts at 8pm and tickets cost £10/£8. Book on 01634 338338 or visit [www.thebrooktheatre.co.uk](http://www.thebrooktheatre.co.uk).

# Country girl is coming to town

## KIM RICHEY

Monday, May 31  
Breeze Bar, Maidstone.



MAVERICK Live welcomes Kim Richey back to Kent next week for another evening of unforgettable music.

The critically-acclaimed Nashville star has released six albums and consistently attracted the praise of the music press. During the last 15 years, she has carved out a reputation as a gifted singer-songwriter and written for a number of high-profile country artists such as Rodney Foster, Trisha Yearwood and George Ducas. She is also a popular solo artist, and although she has not yet seen as much commercial success as her fans feel she deserves, she is a highly-respected figure in the country music community.

A few years ago, Richey moved to London to do some co-writing and her work has attracted Boyzone star Ronan Keating. She has also worked with Giles Martin, son of Beatles producer George Martin, on her album, *Chinese Boxes*.

Although her music is termed as country and Americana, it is difficult to put her music in a pigeonhole, and listeners will need to discover her enchanting sound for themselves.

With her sixth album, *Wreck Your Wheels*, Richey goes back to her Americana roots and aims for an organic sound with no studio tricks to distort the honest performance. She took her touring band back to Nashville and they recorded the album as just five musicians in a room.

"The core band on this record went out on the road with me for my last record, *Chinese Boxes*, and they are friends," Richey said. "We had a great time making the record – we recorded all in the same room at the same time, which was very cosy."

"It's a small studio. We used the front seat of the producer's Honda pulled up next to the door as an isolation booth for the electric guitar amp."

With two Grammy Award nominations to her name, Richey has earned a reputation as a masterful storyteller who captures the truths of life and presents them with music and lyrics which paint colourful pictures.

Richey hails from Zanesville in Ohio and became a teacher before realising that her heart truly lay in music. Her self-titled debut album, released in 1995, provided her first hit *Just My Luck* and the follow-up, *Those Words We Said*. A more pop-oriented sound emerged with the 1996 album *Bitter Sweet*, and her songs have appeared on the soundtrack of popular US TV series, *Angel*.

Glimmer was rated as one of the Top 10 Albums of 1999 by *Time* magazine, while Rolling Stone awarded it four stars. Another album, *Rise*, was chosen as *Alt-Country* Album of the Year in *People* magazine.



In July 2007 she performed in Washington at the Live Earth event. Her songwriting work includes a collaboration with Rodney Foster on *Nobody Wins* and as co-writer on the hit *Believe Me Baby (I Lied)* for Trisha Yearwood.

Her songwriting talent has helped to achieve two numbers ones and four Top Ten hits in the US, alongside numerous Top 50 singles.

British singer James Morrison is among the artists to have recorded her songs and Richey has lent her beautiful voice to albums by Ryan

Adams, Shawn Colvin and Mary Chapin Carpenter.

Other career highlights include appearing on a record by former *Star Trek* actor, William Shatner, which was produced by Ben Folds.

With her music appearing in films and television shows, Richey continues to bring her remarkable music to venues across the world.

The concert starts at 7.30pm and tickets cost £12. To book, call 01622 744481 or go online at [www.mavericklive.co.uk](http://www.mavericklive.co.uk).



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## ONLY PAWS AND HORSES

Sunday, May 30 and Monday, May 31. The Hop Farm, Paddock Wood

ENJOY a celebration of hounds and hooves when the Hop Farm welcomes the first ever Only Paws and Horses show.

This weekend's busy event will bring dogs and horses together for an entertaining family event which demonstrates the skills of these much-loved animals.

Witness the agility and versatility of canines as the British Carriage Association and the British Carriage Dog Society reveal how Dalmatians were once used as carriage dogs.

Experience the excitement of Wild West riding with Susan Wood and her team, on horses which are often used in films.

Find out more about the more sedate Hop Farm Shires and the attraction's sprightly miniature pony.

The West Kent Pony Club and Whitstable Agility Group take part in a series of Horse and Hound competitions, while visitors' dogs can get wet and wild at the K9 Aqua Zone with its Dash 'n' Splash attraction. More fun is on offer for dogs with the Cani Cross race, the Dogstable course and the K9 athletics championship.

Tickets cost £6.50/£5.50/£22 online and £7.50/£6.50/£25 on the gate. To book visit [www.only-pawsandhorses.co.uk](http://www.only-pawsandhorses.co.uk).



## THE RAINBOW FISH

Sunday, May 30, Brook Theatre, Chatham

BASED on a classic children's book, The Rainbow Fish explores the value of friendship.

The beautifully presented production by Blunderbus Theatre Company is a colourful adaptation of Marcus Pfister's much-loved story. Join the Rainbow Fish in her shimmering ocean world in this enchanting family show with a moral.

As the most beautiful fish in the ocean, the Rainbow Fish is very proud of her stunning shiny scales and has become vain. When a small friend asks for one

of her scales, she refuses but soon finds that her vanity has alienated all her friends. So the Rainbow Fish sets out to win back her pals and be happy again.

The show will transport the audience to a glittering underwater paradise. It is ideal for children aged four and above.

Performances start at 2pm and 4pm and tickets cost £4.50 for children or £5.50 for adults. Book online at [www.thebrook-theatre.co.uk](http://www.thebrook-theatre.co.uk) or call the box office on 01634 338338.

## PROMS IN THE PARK

Saturday, May 29,  
Whatman Millennium River Park, Maidstone



PREPARE to fly the flag and join in a good singalong as the Proms in the Park make a triumphant return.

The popular free event attracted a massive crowd last year and filled the Riverside arena, so spectators are advised to go along early to make sure they get a good spot.

With a great atmosphere and high quality music, the outdoor music event is a spring highlight and is sure to provide a lovely evening out.

Conducted by Justin Pearson, the Locrian Orchestra will perform a variety of popular music and the audience will have the chance to join in by singing along to well-known songs.

So pack a hamper full of tasty goodies and a bottle of bubbly, grab those rugs, deckchairs and picnic tables and head down to the park for this much-loved annual event. Picnics are welcome from 4pm and the concert starts at 7.30pm, so early arrival is recommended in order to secure the best spots. The concert will be followed by a spectacular fireworks display at 9pm.

Admission is free. For details visit [www.hazlit-tartscentre.co.uk](http://www.hazlit-tartscentre.co.uk).



## THE TIME TRAVELLER'S GUIDE TO 1850

Saturday, May 29 to Wednesday, June 2  
Dickens World, Chatham



TAKE a very different look at Charles Dickens' literary world as the attraction welcomes a spectacular show.

From this weekend, visitors can see a family-friendly production from Circus of Light, the Time Traveller's Guide to 1850. Created especially for Dickens World, the show presents some of the writer's most popular characters in a different light.

The Artful Dodger will demonstrate just how agile he really is as he juggles with knives and amazes spectators with his wily ways. Oliver Twist lives up to his name, as the most astonishing contortionist duo in Victorian London show how they can transform their bodies into remarkable shapes.

Performing against a dramatic set which features fire, magic and illusion, the acts will take the audience on an exciting journey through Dickens' literary world. A charismatic ringmaster will introduce the acts and keep everyone in line as this extraordinary spectacle unfolds.

The show is at the Britannia Theatre daily from 3.30pm. Tickets cost £8/£7 for the circus performance only or £14/£9 including admission to Dickens World. To book visit [www.dickensworld.co.uk](http://www.dickensworld.co.uk).



## JOUSTING TOURNAMENT

Tuesday, June 1 to Sunday, June 6  
Leeds Castle, near Maidstone



THRILLING action from days gone by can be experienced once again when Leeds Castle hosts a medieval jousting tournament.

Watch fearless knights compete in the authentic arena as part of Jousting at the Field of the Cloth of Gold. The armour-clad warriors will mount their magnificent steeds and perform daredevil stunts as they battle to prove who is the most deadly on horseback.

Watch the fights and falls that entertained monarchs hundreds of years ago, all performed against the stunning backdrop of Leeds Castle. The jousting takes place twice a day and there will also be historical activities to entertain the children. World of Wings will be giving free falconry displays and young visitors can also try their hand at the ancient sport of archery. The castle boasts plenty of Tudor history and was a favourite of King Henry VIII.

Admission costs £17.50/£15 for adults and £10 for children and tickets are valid for a year from the date of purchase. For more information visit [www.leeds-castle.com](http://www.leeds-castle.com) or call 01622 765400.







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the Kent local search directory - Telephone: 01303 817150

# Kentish specialities in idyllic countryside

## ■ Elvey Farm

ELVEY Farm is a medieval farmhouse in a magical setting in the village of Pluckley.

Meridian TV's Jeff Moody is the man behind one of the county's top dining venues and works alongside his partner Simon Peek to offer the best local food.

Since then Jeff and Simon have been amazed at the number or people who come to eat at their restaurant. There is a real buzz about the place, with its fine food and drink and great views across the Kentish countryside.

Every Sunday in July and August there's a jazz band on the terrace, and tables on the lawn.

Simon said: "There's a wonderful atmosphere here on a Jazz Sunday.

There's nothing nicer than listening to a jazz band on a sunny afternoon, drinking wine, eating good food, and looking out over the Kentish fields. People dance on the terrace; some bring their classic cars; most have a Sunday roast; others stop by for a drink and a chat."

The restaurant is set in a 16th century barn and enjoys a wealth of period features.

Specialising in old-fashioned Kentish

recipes, it showcases some of the best local dishes from the present and past – delving back to the cuisine of Victorian, Tudor and even Roman times. All are delicious and unique to Elvey Farm.

Simon and Jeff have tracked down old fashioned dishes such as Kentish huffkins, hop picker's pie, Kentish well pudding and have adapted them for the modern age.

"It's certainly a popular move," said Jeff. "Customers from up and down the county are coming here to eat – some to remember dishes they haven't tried since they were young and others to experience something different.

"Our region is famous for its orchards and hop gardens and over the centuries locals have created mouthwatering and unusual dishes that are truly Kentish."

All meat comes from farms within a five mile radius, fruit and vegetables come from the farm itself, fish is caught off Hythe and ice cream is hand-made with milk from local cows.

Evening meals are served from 6.30-9pm all week, with Sunday lunches from noon to 4pm.

Jazz Sundays run from 1-3.30pm, with a £1.25 cover charge which goes directly to the band.

**Elvey Farm, Elvey lane, Pluckley, Ashford TN27 0SU,**  
[www.elveyfarm.co.uk](http://www.elveyfarm.co.uk) Telephone: 01233 840442



## CHEF RECOMMENDS

### Taj Cuisine

Starter: Mixed starter – lamb and chicken tikka, sheek kebab, samosa and onion bhajee  
Main: Chicken dish. Hot and spicy with Abul's special spices and pilau rice.  
Dessert: Lemon and vanilla ice cream cake  
Telephone: 01634 686648

### Hooden on the Hill

Starter: Crab and prawn salad – local crab served with lemon mayonnaise and salad.  
Main course: Home-made chicken, ham and leek pie with potatoes and vegetables  
Dessert: Home-made banoffee pie  
Telephone: 01233 662226

### The Vineyard

Main course: Fillet of monkfish wrapped in bacon and roasted with fennel seeds, served with a fennel and pernod sauce.  
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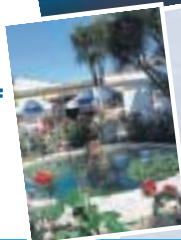
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# yourmusic

## Getting ready for a laugh at LOTF



**STAND UP:** Phill Jupitus will be bringing his unique style of comedy to the festival

■ BY SIMON ROBINSON

**FUNNYMAN** Phill Jupitus will headline this year's Lounge on the Farm comedy tent.

The established panel show and stand-up comic, a regular on the BBC's *Never Mind the Buzzcocks* and *QI* programmes, will bring the laughter line-up to a close on the festival's final night, Sunday, July 11.

Convicted drug smuggler turned author and mayoral candidate Howard Marks will also appear on the Canterbury three-day's comedy bill, taking to the stage on the second night.

A Lounge spokesman said: "With Mr Nice himself Howard Marks in attendance you can be sure of some jaw-droppingly amazing anecdotes from one of the world's greatest raconteurs."

"From being top of the FBI's most wanted list to running for Mayor of London Howard has a treasure trove of tales to draw upon and simply can't be missed. "Sunday will see all-round comedy colossus Phill Jupitus bring his *Impro All Stars* to Merton Farm for some side-splitting unscripted shenanigans."

"Phill is a master at work who will make sure that Lounge on the Farm ends in side-splitting style."

Other highlights from The Playhouse comedy tent include Andre Vincent, who has notched up three sell-out runs at the Edinburgh Festival, and Marty McLean, who has spent the last 11 years taking his observational and occasionally dark humour across North America and Europe.

Comic Pete Cain is also one to watch. The stand-up's second ever gig saw him reach the semi-finals of Channel 4's *So You Think You're Funny* competition in 2002.

Since then he has appeared at every major UK comedy club, warmed up at the BBC for That

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**ON:** Whitstable outfit Flips with perform their track Position Politician



**SMALL GIG:** Smugglers Records at the Tom Thumb Theatre, Cliftonville



### TOP FIVE KENT GIGS

- 1 Craig Sheridan - Aurora (from Deal)
- 2 Rogues Down - Poison Arrow (from Deal)
- 3 Shelta - Beautiful Girl (from Bexley)
- 4 Save Target As - Pieces of our Hearts (from Deal)
- 5 I.R.I.S - Aversion To Light (from Deal)

Mitchell & Webb Look and become a favourite of the summer festival circuit.

During the day The Playhouse tent will be used by a range of children's entertainers.

Among the LOTF headliners are Motown greats Martha Reeves & The Vandellas, ska legends Toots & The Maytals, The Crazy World of Arthur Brown, DJ Yoda and Courtney Pine.

For more information visit [www.loungeonthefarm.co.uk](http://www.loungeonthefarm.co.uk).



**SETTING SAIL:** The 300ft Road To Mandalay, which carries 82 passengers in old colonial grandeur and five-star cabins, is boarded at Yangon

## yourgetaways

# On the road to Mandalay, where the flyin'-fishes play

■ BY THEO UNDERWOOD

IT'S more than 100 years since Rudyard Kipling painted a famous portrait of the East in his poem, *Mandalay* – and when you sail down the Ayeyarwady River in Burma on a luxury cruiser you feel that little has changed since then.

It is hardly, of course, a coincidence that the boat we are travelling on carries the same name as Oley Speaks' later song adaptation of the poem.

The 300ft Road To Mandalay carries 82 passengers in old colonial grandeur and five-star cabins.

To catch the boat, you fly to Singapore and on to Yangon before catching the rickety plane which hovers above dense green jungles, with Burmese military men taking all the front seats.

After that, the creature comforts of The Road To Mandalay are a soothing surprise.

The £4 million refurbishment has created an elegant restaurant with teak wall carvings from Amanapura. Also, 34 new state and deluxe cabins have en-suite bathrooms with jade tiles and walk-in showers.

Now we can sit on deck as Kipling's vivid vision of dawn breaking like thunder and temples shimmering in the sunlight comes to life before our eyes.

Children splash in the shallows, playing tag among themselves while their mothers wash the family's longis – traditional Burmese robes – in the river's thick, khaki-green water.

Fishermen, armed only with bamboo sticks for rods and the bottoms of plastic bottles for goggles, hunt their daily catch from long-tail boats.

Beyond the river's banks, hundreds of pagodas – some made of red sandstone, others gilded with gold leaf – are scattered across the rice fields.

Burma, for much of the time, seems

### FACT FILE: BURMA

Capital	Naypyidaw
Capital	Cairo
Language	Burmese
Population	approx 50,000,000
Currency	Kyat
Religion	Buddhist



Theo Underwood was a guest of Orient Express, which offers the five-night journey in Burma from £1,960, including return flights Bangkok-Yangon-Bangkok, two nights' B&B at The Governor's Residence in Yangon and three nights' full-board in a superior cabin on The Road To Mandalay, a half day's sightseeing tour in Yangon and all internal flights and transfers. Orient Express reservations: 0845 077 2222 and [www.orient-express.com](http://www.orient-express.com).

International flights extra, from approx £745 return.

- With no Burmese currency, the Kyat, available outside the country, tourists pay in dollars. Notes should be of low denomination (below \$20), clean and crisp.
- Visa needed by British passport holders costs £14, lasts 90 days and allows a visit up to 28 days. Apply to Burmese Embassy in London, although Orient-Express also arranges visas.

to have missed out on the 20th century: Or perhaps it is a trick of the strange, ethereal quality of the light.

Before setting sail from Mandalay, I took a rowing boat out on Taung Tha Man lake. The light at dusk broke through the teak struts of U Bein's bridge – a 1,300m-long skeletal structure rising from the water.

However, one of the most exhilarating experiences Burma offers awaited us 120 miles downstream.

A hot-air balloon whisked us 2,000ft above the ancient city of Bagan for a breathtaking view of its 4,000 temples, stupas and pagodas.

The city itself no longer exists, but its shrines to Buddha, built over hundreds of years on a stretch of delta the size of Manhattan Island, appear one by one at sunrise to form an intricate, crimson patchwork on an ochre landscape.

After our bumpy landing, eased by Champagne, we joined a bicycle tour for a close-up view of Bagan's temples.

Many are adorned with frescos telling the story of Buddha and although most have decayed in to ruin, or are awaiting restoration following the devastating 1975 earthquake, there are a few murals worth seeing – thanks to the intervention of UNESCO.

It is easy to be overawed by spectacular monuments to Buddhism in Bagan. While a temple, stupa or pagoda can be found at every turn, Burmese people deeply respect the religion and the monks – even if they are not committed Buddhists.

Given the tense political situation, many travellers avoid Burma. However, Orient-Express argues its involvement preserves jobs – around 150 on the boat and 110 at The Governor's Residence Hotel.

Square your own conscience before you depart. Repression may enable Burma to preserve the mystery of the Orient, lost beneath tourist hordes in other parts of south-east Asia.



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Athens	22°C	New York	17°C
Barcelona	22°C	Paris	28°C
Beijing	26°C	Rome	22°C
Bombay	33°C	Sydney	17°C
Cape Town	18°C	Tenerife	22°C
Cardiff	19°C	Tokyo	18°C
Gibraltar	21°C	Vancouver	13°C
Hong Kong	29°C	Warsaw	18°C
Las Palmas	23°C	Wellington	14°C

## KENT'S WEEKEND HIGH TIDES

Chatham	Saturday	2:27pm 5.9m	Sunday	3:06pm 5.8m
Dover	Saturday	12:47pm 6.4m	Sunday	1:27pm 6.4m
Dungeness	Saturday	12:41pm 7.4m	Sunday	1:20pm 7.3m
Ramsgate	Saturday	1:17pm 4.9m	Sunday	1:57pm 4.9m
Sheerness	Saturday	2:17pm 5.6m	Sunday	2:56pm 5.6m
Whitstable	Saturday	2:20pm 5.1m	Sunday	2:59pm 5.1m

## FIVE-DAY KENT FORECAST

	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon														
Ashford	15°C	12°C	16°C	15°C	17°C	Dover	14°C	11°C	13°C	14°C	14°C	Gravesend	17°C	14°C	16°C	16°C	17°C	Sevenoaks	16°C
Canterbury	13°C	12°C	14°C	16°C	16°C	Faversham	14°C	12°C	15°C	15°C	15°C	Maidstone	16°C	13°C	16°C	16°C	17°C	Sittingbourne	14°C
Chatham	14°C	12°C	15°C	15°C	15°C	Folkestone	14°C	11°C	13°C	14°C	14°C	Ramsgate	13°C	12°C	14°C	16°C	16°C	Tonbridge	17°C
Dartford	17°C	14°C	16°C	16°C	17°C	Gillingham	14°C	12°C	15°C	15°C	15°C	Rochester	14°C	12°C	15°C	15°C	15°C	Tun Wells	17°C



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# Exotic locations and bird-brained antics save game's screen move

■ BY DAMON SMITH

INSPIRED by the best-selling video games series, *Prince Of Persia: The Sands Of Time* is a rollicking escapade that marries gorgeous Moroccan locations with state-of-the-art visual effects.

The time-bending storyline of Mike Newell's big-budget adventure incorporates a romantic subplot to appeal to female audiences who might otherwise give this testosterone-heavy romp a wide berth.

The casting of a buffed-up Jake Gyllenhaal in the lead role will also prove a draw as the Oscar-nominated star of *Brokeback Mountain* casts aside his indie credentials to throw himself into this mindless popcorn fodder.

Physically, he is more than a match for any protracted fight sequence in Boaz Yakin, Doug Miro and Carlo Bernard's predictable script and he nails the British accent of his gung-ho hero.

However, there's no emotional content and the flirtation with ballsy co-star Gemma Arterton remains suitably chaste so that his dashing saviour doesn't soften his macho hunk image.

A brief prologue establishes the lineage of King Sharaman with a visit to a Persian marketplace, where the monarch picks a street urchin called Dastan to become his surrogate son.

"A son with no royal blood and no eye on his throne," booms the voiceover.

Fifteen years later, rugged Dastan (played by Gyllenhaal) joins his brothers Tus and Garsiv as they head for a fortress controlled by Princess Tamina (Arterton), which is rumoured to be the source of weapons for the king's enemies.

During the assault on the city defences, Dastan unwittingly acquires a mythical dagger – a powerful gift from the gods which allows the holder to reverse the flow of time.



**FANTASY ROLE:** Garsiv (Toby Kebbell) and Nizam (Sir Ben Kingsley) are out for revenge on Dastan (Jake Gyllenhaal)

He is then framed for the murder of his beloved father and forced to flee for his life, with Tamina in tow.

Spurred on by their nefarious uncle Nizam (Ben Kingsley), Tus and jealous sibling Garsiv vow to slay Dastan in revenge for their father's murder.

Meanwhile, the outlaws encounter ostrich-racing supremo Amar and realise that the only way to unmask the real killer is to manipulate the dagger and turn back time.

*Prince Of Persia: The Sands Of Time* would be much more fun as an interactive experience, with the ability to control Dastan as he

leaps and somersaults through each action-oriented interlude. As a film, it's a pedestrian affair, enlivened by the comic relief of Amar, who loses his entire enterprise apart from one plucky bird with suicidal tendencies.

Director Newell, who made *Harry Potter And The Goblet Of Fire*, orchestrates the set pieces with verve and he confidently melds live action elements with digital trickery.

Yet even he is powerless to stop the special effects occasionally overwhelming the screen, building to a final flourish that skirts dangerously close to the dreaded summation 'And it was only a dream...'



**PRINCE OF PERSIA:  
THE SANDS OF TIME**  
Certificate 12a



## YOUR TV REVIEW

**I'M IN A ROCK'N'ROLL BAND:** BBC Two, 9.40pm, Saturday

■ BY THOMAS BETTS

THE wild men (and women) of rock are a fascinating breed, and we've all heard the numerous famous stories of bad behaviour a hundred times.

You know the kind of thing: Bentleys submerged in swimming pools, television sets thrown out of hotel windows and enough drink, drugs and women to section most of us.

But as many times as we've heard them, that doesn't make them any less interesting and they are revisited in BBC Two's *I'm in a Rock'n'Roll Band*.

The usual suspects are all here: Led Zeppelin, The Who, Jimi Hendrix, The Rolling Stones, Deep Purple, Alice Cooper and, of course, Ozzy Osbourne.

This six-part series looks at just what is in the DNA of the likes of Keith Richards and Jim Morrison, and revels in the stupidity of it all.

Each show focuses on the different

band members, and we've had episodes on singers, guitarists and drummers thus far.

It's a nice idea, and some of the archive footage is great, but it feels like a bit of a retread at times.

Mixed in with those well-known Parables of Rawk are the usual talking heads that take us into list-show territory.

That's fine when the thoughts of those directly involved are aired, but when it's just the likes of rent-a-gobs like Edith Bowman or Lauren Laverne telling you what they "reckon", you want to change channel.

Still, the occasional little nugget you may not have heard or seen before spills out.

I mean, who knew that at the height of Motley Crue's powers, drummer Tommy Lee had a flying, revolving drum kit that span upside down over the stadium audience while he was strapped in and smashing away?

Not me, and that's the kind of useless yet entertaining rock morsel that keeps you from fingering the remote.

What we learn most, however, is that most of these characters were talented but very lucky and just liked to prat about and have a good time, something we can all relate to.

The run culminates with a special to see which monsters of rock viewers have voted in to a fantasy supergroup line-up.

The series, in its entirety, is available to watch on BBC iPlayer if you have missed an episode and feel like swatting up on your Rock 101.



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2006	06	Astra Active	16	5	Ultra blue	37,000	6,995
2007	07	Astra Design Auto Estate	18	5	Silver lightening	22,190	7,495
2007	07	Astra Sri Sports hatch X pack	16 TBO	3	Flame red	29,810	9,995
2007	07	Astra Club Auto	18	5	Panacotta	30,350	6,995
2007	57	Astra VXR	2.0	3	Arden blue	25,000	13,995
2008	08	Astra Sri	18	5	Black sapphire	20,100	8,995
2008	08	Astra Design CDTi Auto	19D	5	Star silver	22,200	9,995
2008	08	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	16	3	Silver lightening	24,300	9,695
2008	08	Astra Sri X Pack	18	5	Black sapphire	14,575	10,495
2008	58	Astra Sri CDTi X Pack	19D	3	Star silver	10,100	12,795
2008	58	Astra Sri Ex Pack	18	3	Black sapphire	5,960	10,995
2009	09	Astra Club	14	5	Silver lightening	18,218	9,495
2009	09	Astra Sri CDTi X Pack	19D	5	Star silver	9,710	14,995
2009	09	Astra Active	14	5	Black sapphire	9,650	9,995
2009	59	Astra Active	16	5	Sovereign silver	4,780	10,995
2009	59	Astra Sxi eco flex	17D	5	Sovereign silver	3,400	12,995
2009	59	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	16	3	Ultra blue	5,800	10,995
2009	59	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	16	3	Star silver	Del mileage	11,995
2009	59	Astra Sports Twin top	18	2	Air blue	3,320	16,995
2009	59	Astra Sxi CDTi	19D	5	Power red	8,000	13,495

### CORSA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2004	04*	Corza Energy	10	3	Black sapphire	42,500	3,695
2004	04*	Corza Design	12	5	Star silver	63,890	3,995
2006	06*	Corza Sxi +	12	3	Flame red	57,600	4,695
2006	56	Corza Design CDTi	13D	5	Flame red	38,450	7,995
2007	07	Corza Design	14	3	Tea green	17,620	7,195
2007	57	Corza Design CDTi	13D	5	Star silver	37,900	7,995
2009	09	Corza Active	10	5	Star silver	6,270	8,475
2009	09	Corza Sxi A/c	12	5	Metro blue	19,970	9,495
2009	59	Corza Life CDTi	13D	5	Black sapphire	4,600	9,995
2009	59	Corza Life CDTi	13D	5	Star silver	9,950	9,695

2009	59	Corza Active CDTi	13D	5	Silver lightening	4,300	10,495
2009	59	Corza Club CDTi	13D	5	Metro blue	6,480	9,995
2009	59	Corza Sxi A/c	14	3	Silver lightening	800	10,495
2009	59	Corza Sxi A/c X pack	14	3	Black sapphire	10,150	11,495
2010	59	Corza Active	10	3	Flame red	Delivery	9,995

### INSIGNIA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2009	09	Insignia Tourer Exclusive	18	5	Black sapphire	9,300	13,995
2009	09D	Insignia SE CDTi Nav	2.0	4	Technical grey	19,826	14,995
2009	09	Insignia Sri CDTi	2.0	5	Star silver	24,545	14,995
2009	59	Insignia Sri Nav CDTi	2.0	4	Black sapphire	7,350	17,995
2009	59	Insignia Elite CDTi Nav	2.0	5	Sovereign silver	6,550	22,995
2009	59	Insignia CDTi ECO Exclusive	2.0	5	Silver lake	7,350	17,495

### ANTARA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2009	59	Antara Exclusive CDTi	2.0D	5	Colour Placid grey	18,995	18,995

### MERIVA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2006	56	Meriva Life A/C	14	5	Steel blue	19,730	5,995
2009	09	Meriva Active	16	5	Steel silver	10,450	9,995
2009	09	Meriva Life A/c	14	5	Metro blue	8,320	9,295

### TIGRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2007	07	Tigra Exclusive Red	14	2	Colour Metro blue	32,500	8,795
2009	59	Tigra Air	14	2	Antigua	4,425	12,995

### VECTRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2007	57	Vectra Design Auto CDTi	19D	5	Star silver	20,400	9,995
2008	08	Vectra Design	1.8	4	Panacotta	25,050	7,995
2008	08	Vectra Exclusiv CDTi + pack	19D	5	Silver lightening	41,700	8,795
2009	58	Vectra Exclusive CDTi	19D	5	Silver	18,325	9,495
2008	58	Vectra Exclusive	1.8	5	Black sapphire	15,390	8,795

### ZAFIRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
2005	05*	Zafira Design CDTi Auto	2.0	5	Star silver	53,000	6,495
2007	07	Zafira Energy	1.6	5	Silver lightening	19,400	7,995
2007	07	Zafira Energy	1.6	5	Black sapphire	28,320	7,995
2008	58	Zafira Exclusive	1.6	5	Star silver	13,700	9,995
2009	09	Zafira Exclusiv	1.6	5	Metro blue	5,560	11,495
2009	59	Zafira Active CDTi+	19D	5	Ultra blue	2,880	14,995
2009	59	Zafira Design CDTi	1.9	5	Panacotta	2,200	16,995

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One monthly payment**	<b>£292.69</b>	Total charge for credit	<b>£666.84</b>	Excess mileage charge per mile	<b>14.9p</b>
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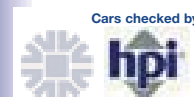
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## PROPERTY NEWS

### Buy-to-let market gets loans boost

Steve Osborne, The Mortgage Man, shares his knowledge with you in this new fortnightly column



THE buy-to-let sector looks likely to be revitalised following the re-introduction of 80 per cent mortgages to this area of the housing market.

It marks an end to a long period during which lenders were wary of providing funds for the buy to let market and were insisting on borrowers raising a significant deposit before providing any finance.

This requirement stifled the market by making it difficult for investors to withdraw equity from their portfolios to make further purchases.

This week's re-introduction of 80 per cent mortgages for buy-to-let properties means that landlords now only need to find a deposit of 20 per cent in order to purchase homes to let.

Although the offer is currently only available to experienced landlords, it is a major leap forward and I expect to see further enhancements in the weeks and months to come.

We are still some way off of seeing 85 per cent borrowing available for buy-to-lets, which is where we were some time ago, but I don't believe this is a bad thing if we want to see long-term growth and stability in the housing market as a whole.

Fees are still an issue with buy-to-let mortgages, with many lenders charging up to 3.5 per cent at the outset. While this may work for smaller mortgages, it makes larger loans expensive and it would be helpful to see some lenders offering a fixed fee structure.

As with all mortgages, landlords need to weigh up the total cost of borrowing and not just consider the headline rate, however appealing it may appear.

This more relaxed lending approach is bound to result in more people buying second homes to let, and with house prices lower than they have been in the past, this may be the right time to buy.

There are lots of options and pitfalls, though, so make sure you get professional advice before considering buying property to let.

Steve Osborne The Mortgage Company Ashford



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# Price rise allays fears of 'double dip' market

■ BY NICK AMES

HOUSE prices will rise by an average of £9,000 this year, despite a slower-than-usual start to 2010, economists have predicted.

Interest rates will remain low, encouraging buyers to return to the market, and this will have the effect of boosting prices by 5.3 per cent this year, according to the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR).

It means the value of the average home in the UK would rise from £169,500, as calculated by Britain's biggest lender Halifax, to £178,500 by the end of this year.

The predictions have gone on to look at how things will turn out over the coming years as well. There will be a lower increase of 3.4 per cent in 2011, followed by a strong rise of nine per cent in 2012, CEBR predicted.

It comes after a fall in prices of more than 16 per cent in 2008 amid the financial meltdown which severely hit the market and led to gloomy predictions about the future.

David Hollingworth, of mortgage brokers London and Country, said: "It does not suggest that the market is back to normal, as transactions remain low, but it is a step in the right direction and it puts paid to suggestions of a double dip in the housing market."

The Bank of England is widely predicted to increase interest rates to 2.25 per cent by the end of 2011, but CEBR forecasts it will remain



at 0.5 per cent until then. The group added, however, that the bank rate could be temporarily higher if there was a hung parliament. But the impact of this was likely to be temporary, it said, and within 18 months rates would be back where they would have been if

a single party had won the election.

It suggested average mortgage rates will fall from current levels of around four per cent to three per cent by the beginning of 2011 as markets begin to realize that interest rates will stay lower for longer than expected.

## Fixed rate loans reach new low

FIXED-RATE mortgages have fallen to their lowest level since April 2007, while average two-year fixed-rate offers have fallen 3.36 per cent since April 2008, according to a new report.

Hannah-Mercedes Skenfield, the mortgages channel manager for the website moneysupermarket.com, revealed the results of the company's study and said that it was promising that fixed-rate mortgage rates were "moving in the right direction" and were returning to their lowest level since the height of the recession.

She continued: "With inflation rising, the potential for the Bank of England to increase the base rate in the near future increases, so borrowers who are looking to fix their mortgage repayment should consider whether now

is the perfect time to switch."

However, Ms Skenfield added that borrowers need to consider any fees associated with the mortgage switch before they make any decisions to grab the lowest rate available, as the deal may not represent the best value in the long run.

According to John Charcol research released this week, last month's home loan market was dominated by variable rates, which accounted for 84 per cent of mortgages.

The news comes alongside predictions for the future of the housing market over the next few months.

A spokeswoman for the Council of Mortgage Lenders made her assertions that there will be little movement following release of the Hometrack house price index, which explained

that house prices increased by 0.2 per cent in April.

Furthermore, the supply of homes for sale – coming in at 3.7 per cent of the market as a whole – is outstripping demand, which remains at a comparatively low one per cent.

The representative further explained that there would be a major slowing-down in the market and asserted that the organisation was not expecting too much movement on prices or transactions.

She continued: "There'll be a few ups and downs as we go along which is to be expected but at the moment there are very, very low levels of transactions."

"Not very many people out there are actually buying houses or mortgaging houses at the moment."

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### Weaving

- Three bedroom detached bungalow
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### Bearsted

- Well presented terrace with three bedrooms
- Refitted kitchen, bathroom and cloakroom
- Double glazing

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### Maidstone

- Bungalow in cul-de-sac setting
- Three bedrooms, lounge, dining room
- Garden & garage

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### Maidstone

- Semi detached
- Lounge, dining room, kitchen,
- Two bedrooms & refitted bathroom

**Asking Price £165,000**

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### Maidstone

- Semi detached house
- Fitted kitchen, dining room & study
- Garden & off-road parking

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### Weaving

- Very well presented three bedroom house
- Situated on popular Grove Green
- Refitted kitchen, carpets

**£229,995**

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### Maidstone

- A well presented three bedroom semi
- Situated in a cul de sac
- UPVC double glazing

**£179,995**

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### Maidstone

- Semi detached house
- South side of Maidstone
- Three/four bedroom

**£165,000**

CALL OUR MAIDSTONE OFFICE 01622 757213



### Maidstone

- Two bedroom terrace property
- Lounge, kitchen/diner & bathroom
- D/glazing & c/heating

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# Bairstow eves

**Maidstone 01622 691554**

maidstone@bairstoweves.co.uk

**Countrywide**

## West Malling



**£125,000**

Terrace property, three bedrooms, bathroom, lounge, dining room, kitchen, cloakroom & storage area. Garden.

## Maidstone



**£139,995**

Open plan reception room with kitchen area, lounge, 2 bedrooms & bathroom. There Roof garden.

## Linton



**£144,950**

Character cottage comprises sitting room, bathroom, modern kitchen, cellar, & two bedrooms. Garden & parking.

## Maidstone



**£155,000**

Two bedroom ground floor apartment. En suite to master, bathroom, kitchen area opening to a large living room. Allocated parking.

## Maidstone



**Offers in excess of £160,000**

First floor flat with two bedrooms, En-suite to master, bathroom, living room & fitted kitchen/dining room. D/glazing, c/heating & parking.

## Coxheath



**£180,000**

Semi detached family property, three bedrooms, bathroom, living room, kitchen, cloakroom & conservatory. Garage, driveway & garden.

## Maidstone



**Offers Over £200,000**

Four bedroom home. Two reception rooms, kitchen, four bedrooms, bathroom, garage and hardstanding to front.

## Larkfield



**£209,995**

Two bed ground floor apartment. Bathroom to the master, bathroom and large living room opening to a fitted kitchen.

## Maidstone



**£270,000**

Three bedroom semi detached home. Two reception rooms, kitchen, garage/workshop & garden to front, side and rear.

## Ditton



**£450,000**

Five bedroom property. Two reception rooms, lounge, dining room, conservatory & office. Gardens, garage & driveway.

[www.bairstoweves.co.uk](http://www.bairstoweves.co.uk)

[www.mortgagescountrywide.co.uk](http://www.mortgagescountrywide.co.uk)



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# Madeleine Rose



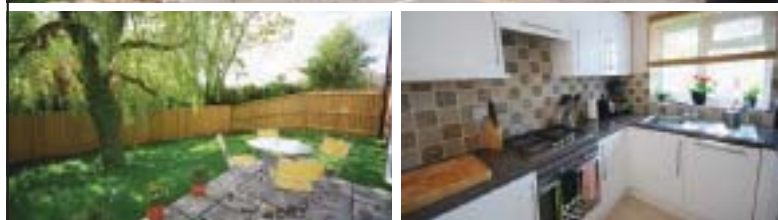
## Maidstone £895,000

This unique property is located a short distance from the town centre and provides a wealth of original character features. There are open fires throughout, picture rails, decorative cornice and oak panelling coupled with high ceilings and large sash windows. The large plot of 0.75 acres ensures a grand setting for the house. There is a large driveway with plenty of parking, double and single garage. There is an expansive lawn with neat flower borders and established shrubs and trees as well as a greenhouse.



## Sutton Valence £625,000

This modern detached house is set in a large plot with immaculate gardens, perfect for those seeking a semi rural home within easy reach of the local villages and motorway connections. The property provides spacious and well presented accommodation with four ground floor reception rooms, four double bedrooms two with ensuite bathrooms and a family bathroom. There is a detached double garage with office space above and plenty of parking.



## Headcorn £975 pcm

Modern and very well presented detached three bedroom house conveniently located for easy access to Headcorn shops and mainline rail station. Presented in very good neutral decor throughout, accommodation provides an entrance lobby, modern fitted kitchen with integrated dishwasher, washing machine, electric oven and gas hob, fridge and freezer. Good size living/dining room with patio doors to sun terrace. Ground floor shower room. Stairs to first floor landing with master bedroom, double bedroom and large single bedroom. Modern bathroom with bath and shower. L-shaped rear garden with sun terrace and lawned areas. Single garage and ORP. Fully double glazed.

# MORE PROPERTIES REQUIRED







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**LOOSE £365,000-£380,000**

A modern four/five bedroom detached family residence offering a degree of seclusion with two main reception rooms, study/bedroom 5, kitchen/breakfast room and utility room.



**MAIDSTONE £380,000**

A substantial beautifully presented and well maintained five bed period style semi detached property with two reception rooms, kitchen and breakfast area. Walking distance of Loose School.



**HYTHE £450,000**

A well presented 'deceptive' detached chalet bungalow having an attic master bedroom with en-suite and four additional ground floor bedrooms and a double detached garage/workshop.



**COXHEATH £210,000**

A well presented two double bed semi detached bungalow, located in a popular village with lounge overlooking the rear garden, kitchen with attached conservatory. Approx 80ft rear garden.



**COXHEATH £214,500**

A well presented three bedroom semi detached residence having off rad parking for two vehicles. Situated in a cul de sac location convenient for local schools, shops, village hall and playing field. NO ONWARD CHAIN



**MAIDSTONE £139,000**

A unique opportunity to purchase this quirky two bedroom maisonette with separate garden and detached single garage convenient for Maidstone town centre.



**Maidstone office: 01622 741 147 Kent office: 0845 309 272**

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We are recruiting roles for all levels of experience and would be extremely pleased to receive applications from the following candidates:

- Solicitors, Legal Executives and Paralegals already working within a personal injury / credit hire environment, looking to further their careers.
- Insurance company claims personnel with experience in dealing with personal injury claims of any complexity.
- Other exceptional candidates who have a real interest in starting a career in the field of Personal Injury, who may have some relevant experience gained in other role

We are also recruiting for the following positions:-

- First Response Unit Trainee Paralegals
- Cost Draftsman -all levels
- Web Developers

All roles within the Practice attract very competitive salaries.

To apply email with your CV to [Rebecca@taylor-green.co.uk](mailto:Rebecca@taylor-green.co.uk) or call 0208 313 7863

**TAYLOR GREEN**



**Saint George's**  
Church of England School  
Humanities College

Meadow Road, Gravesend  
Kent DA11 7LS  
Tel: 01474 533082  
Fax: 01474 561536

HEADTEACHER: Mrs A Southgate BDAKC

Church of England, Voluntary Aided, Humanities College  
11-18, Mixed, Comprehensive School

## FAMILY LIAISON OFFICER

**FIXED TERM 12 MONTH CONTRACT**  
(Full time post - 37 hours per week, Term Time Only)  
Kent Scheme Band 6 £18,471 to £20,262  
(approx £15,586 to £17,098)

We are seeking to appoint a Family Liaison Officer to drive attendance and to work proactively to reduce persistent absence. We are seeking to appoint a person who is enthusiastic, tenacious and self motivated to work with young people and their families who are experiencing difficulties in maintaining a minimum attendance of 94%.

Saint George's C of E School is an over-subscribed school. This post comes at an exciting time for the school as we are preparing for new buildings under Wave 4 of BSF.

Saint George's C of E School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All appointments are subject to List 99 and enhanced CRB checks. Contact us to request further details and an application form.

Email [dhariwalj@saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk](mailto:dhariwalj@saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk) or visit our website [www.saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk](http://www.saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk)

**Closing Date: 14 June 2010**



## THE NEW SCHOOL AT WEST HEATH SEVENOAKS

"Rebuilding lives through education"

Principal & Chief Executive: Mrs Christina Wells (BA Hons.)

The New School at West Heath works towards helping students develop life skills and enjoy social activities. As a team we share a real desire to set a new, even higher standard of care in education and you can help us achieve this goal. The School has approval status from the DiCS and has an excellent rapport with both parents and the Local Authorities.

## VICE PRINCIPAL, BOARDING AND CARE

Required from Autumn 2010

The Vice Principal will be responsible for developing and managing a comprehensive and flexible range of services to meet the needs of our boarding students whilst ensuring the school operates in an efficient and effective manner.

Contact Lynne McGrath for an application form and job description.  
Email: [personnel@westheathschool.com](mailto:personnel@westheathschool.com) Tel: 01732 460553 ext 294

Closing date for applications 11th June 2010  
Interviews week commencing 14th June 2010

The successful applicants will be subject to a CRB check and Vetting & Barring.

The New School at West Heath is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

## SALES ADMINISTRATOR

Sevenoaks Peugeot

Required to join a strong team at this successful branch.

The successful applicant will have

- skills gained in a similar role in the industry, although training will be given
- a highly organised work ethic
- excellent interpersonal skills and a positive approach.
- good computer skills

Please telephone Sue Byrom on 01732 740740



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**We are currently recruiting for our new store at 4-5 Valence House, Sutton Road, Maidstone.**

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If you are ready, email your CV to [staff@castlebarn.myzen.co.uk](mailto:staff@castlebarn.myzen.co.uk)



## EXPERIENCED SALES EXECUTIVE

We have an exciting opportunity for an experienced Sales Executive within our Hyundai, Dodge, Chrysler and Jeep operations at Maidstone. Ideally you'll already be working in a motor dealership or possess previous knowledge. You'll need to be an organised, articulate team player, capable of converting enquiries into sales. In return we offer an excellent salary and commission package.

## SUNDAY RECEPTIONIST

We're looking for a Sunday Receptionist to meet and greet customers coming into our busy Maidstone dealership. As the first point of contact you must be a well-presented individual with a professional manner. Basic administrative and telephone experience will be required as well as ad-hoc duties within the showroom.

To apply for these positions email your CV to Mark Wood, Dealer Principal: [mark.wood@whitehousegroup.co.uk](mailto:mark.wood@whitehousegroup.co.uk)

**Whitehouse Maidstone**

1-17 The Broadway Maidstone, Kent ME16 8QX

## Heath Farm Foster Care, Education & Therapy

To support our continued growth and development we are seeking to recruit the following positions:

### TEAM MANAGER (New Post)

£38,000 - £45,000 • Company Car Provided

We are seeking an experienced, highly motivated and forward thinking social worker to manage the social work team towards achieving best outcomes for children and young people through providing high levels of support to carers and effective coordination of Heath Farm services. Social Work Qualification and GSCC Registration essential.

### ADMINISTRATOR (New Post)

£13,011

To support the social work team we are seeking an additional administrator. You will be responsible for the company database and provide back up support to reception. Experienced user of MS Office applications or similar required.

### BENEFITS INCLUDE:

To the right candidates we can offer a range of benefits including excellent working conditions, private health care insurance, company pension scheme and access to regular supervision and professional development.

Closing date for both applications is Monday 7th June 2010  
Interviews will take place w/c 14th June 2010

Heath Farm is an Equal Opportunities employer and operates a no smoking policy.

If you have the ability and qualities required and wish to join a successful and growing organisation where your skills will be appreciated, email [wcameron@heathfarm.org](mailto:wcameron@heathfarm.org) for an application pack Tel: 01233 712030

To advertise in this section



**01303 817040**





# Skills & Employability Coaches are required:

**Do you want to make a lasting difference to the lives of young people in Kent & Medway? Do you have strong interpersonal skills and a proven ability to motivate and engage young people?**

Justonestep is seeking to recruit Skills & Employability coaches to work with disadvantaged young adults, 16-24 yrs in the local community of Thanet and across Kent & Medway.

We wish to recruit committed individuals in return for a competitive salary, funded CPD and an excellent working environment. You will work within a dedicated Skills & Employability team to provide innovative, bespoke solutions as part of your client's journey to sustainable employment.

Candidates should have experience in engaging and motivating disadvantaged and excluded groups and demonstrate a desire to pass on their skills and experience to clients. Previous experience of coaching/mentoring with this client group will be a distinct advantage.

Whilst it is beneficial for candidates to be working towards or to hold a recognised qualification in Information Advice and Guidance, teaching certificate, NVQ Assessor Award (A1) and Internal Verifier, Award (V1), Justonestep will provide training and support for the right candidate to achieve these qualifications if necessary.

**Salary:** £16k – £22k pro rata. Negotiable + benefits (Competitive depending on qualifications)

**Location:** Thanet and Kent & Medway

**Closing Date:** 7th June

**Start Date:** End of June

**Initial contract period:** June 2010- July 2012

This is an exciting opportunity to join a forward thinking, innovative and vibrant company and so if you are a committed, hard working, supportive, flexible team member and have the ability to relate to a wide range of people, we would like to hear from you.

To apply for this role please contact **Julie Durant** on **07969 463 809** for an informal chat, or e-mail your CV with covering letter to [julie@justonestep.co.uk](mailto:julie@justonestep.co.uk)

**Gravesend Grammar School for Girls**  
A Specialist Science and Language College

Pelham Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 0JE  
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email: [enquiries@gsgs.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@gsgs.org.uk)

## Part-Time Teacher of PE (Maternity Cover 0.4 FTE)

**Required from Sept 2010  
Main Professional Scale**

We are seeking to appoint an enthusiastic and committed PE Teacher to cover maternity leave from Sept 2010 to June 2011.

The ideal candidate will be able to teach KS3 and KS4 core PE. Willingness to contribute to extra-curricular activities would be an advantage. The role is part time maternity cover for 2 days a week or equivalent.

## Part-Time Teacher of Music (Maternity Cover 0.6 FTE)

**Required from Sept 2010  
Main Professional Scale**

We are seeking to appoint an enthusiastic and committed Music Teacher to cover maternity leave from Sept 2010 to June 2011.

The ideal candidate will be able to teach music up to A level. Willingness to contribute to extra-curricular activities would be an advantage. The role is part time maternity cover for 3 days a week or equivalent.

The School has a high profile for achievement locally and nationally and prides itself on a strong record of internal professional development including a full induction in the Summer term.

The School is also an Investor in People and an Investor in Careers.

We have been a Specialist Science College since September 2004 and a Specialist Language College since April 2009.

Application forms and further details are available from the School Office. Completed forms should be returned by post, fax or email for the attention of Mrs E Wilson, Headteacher no later than Wednesday 9 June 2010

*This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.*

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## Career opportunities at MidKent College

### Human Resources Advisor Full or Part-time Opportunity

**Salary: £30,002 - £37,179**

MidKent College has existed for over 80 years and we pride ourselves on our responsiveness to employers and ability to meet the needs of our students. In July 2009 we successfully opened our new £86m campus for the Medway towns and are due to commence modernisation work at our Maidstone campus.

As part of our continued development we are looking to recruit a Human Resources Advisor who will help deliver our operational commitment, primarily at our Maidstone campus.

You will provide comprehensive Human Resources (HR) advice and guidance to the Campus Senior Leadership Team, managers and staff and actively participate in development of employment policies. In addition, you will lead on staff consultation processes, people planning, change management processes, recruitment and absence management in your designated departments. As an HR generalist you will engage with our stakeholders to enhance and support the delivery of outstanding learning opportunities at the College.

This role will involve working closely with the Head of HR and is a rare and exciting opportunity to help develop a fit for purpose HR support service.

The ideal candidate for this role will be CPD qualified and have experience of working in unionised environments. The person will have a track record delivering professional HR advice and support and be able to demonstrate that they have the knowledge and experience to improve the performance of the HR function.

**For an informal discussion please contact Ian Johnston, Head of Human Resources on 01634 383601. Please specify on your application whether you are interested in a full or part-time position.**

**Benefits include:** Bonaniden Healthcare, Pension, Generous Annual Leave, Flexible working, Childcare Vouchers

**CLOSING DATE: 11 JUNE 2010 INTERVIEW DATE: 17 JUNE 2010**

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from [www.midkent.ac.uk](http://www.midkent.ac.uk). Alternatively, please e-mail [job.applications@midkent.ac.uk](mailto:job.applications@midkent.ac.uk). For individuals without access to e-mail or the Internet please call the HR department on 01634 383102 (24-hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

**MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer**

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If you want to take home more than great pay, call us now on 01302 573333, quoting ref: 68/05/1/10 or apply online at [www.dfs.co.uk](http://www.dfs.co.uk)

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**THAMESVIEW SCHOOL with Business & Enterprise Status**  
Thong Lane, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 4LF  
Headteacher: **Miss R. Hughes** B.Ed Hons  
Tel: 01474 566552 Fax: 01474 537405  
email: [school@thamesview.kent.sch.uk](mailto:school@thamesview.kent.sch.uk)  
Website: <http://www.thamesview.kent.sch.uk>

## Headteacher's Personal Assistant (PA) (with Clerk to Governors' Role)

Required for June 2010

37 hours per week for 40 weeks per year (term time plus one week)  
Kent Salary Scale 8 (pts 24-28) £23,053.00 to £26,421.00 pa  
Pro rata to £19,959.29 to £22875.30 pa  
Plus an allowance of £1600 pa for out of hours meetings  
Lunch duty assistance 30 mins per day

We wish to appoint an experienced and dedicated administrative member of staff to the permanent position of Headteacher's PA to support her continuing to deliver a high level of leadership at our successful school. You will be the key confidential secretarial and administrative support for the Headteacher, line managing the main Office staff and working alongside the leadership team to help continue to move the school forward. The successful applicant must:

- Have strong interpersonal skills and demonstrate a high level of efficiency.
- Be able to liaise and communicate confidently with all levels of the school and its local community.
- Be confident to work independently, take initiative and multi-task.
- Have a cheerful disposition and demonstrate a positive outlook.
- Be a self-motivated worker who enjoys working in a school with young people.
- Be a positive, professional role model to the admin team.
- Be highly organised and able to manage your time well to meet deadlines when juggling a range of tasks

We are in the current wave of Building Schools for the Future (BSF), so have a brand new school due to open in July 2010 with incredible facilities for indoor and outdoor learning. Our new reception area has been designed to create an open-plan welcoming environment.

After 4 years of innovative improvement, Thamesview has now been awarded 'Good' (2) by Ofsted (in February 2009) for our 'Overall Effectiveness'.

You will be expected to submit an application form, including a 2-page letter outlining your reasons for wanting this position, together with evidence of how you have developed your own skills in readiness for this position. We are looking for the right person in this role, so if you think that you have the skills or the potential to put your stamp on this important role in the school then we want you to apply. If you think this sounds exciting, please telephone: ext 208 or email [k.allen@thamesview.kent.sch.uk](mailto:k.allen@thamesview.kent.sch.uk) for further information. Details are also on our website: [www.thamesview.kent.sch.uk](http://www.thamesview.kent.sch.uk)

**Closing Date - 27th May 2010 at 10.00am**  
**Interviews - w/c 7th June 2010**

*The school is very conveniently located – 50 minutes to central London by train; 5 minutes to Ebbsfleet International Station; 15 minutes to the M25. Candidates are very welcome to visit the school. Please call to make arrangements.*

*We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students.  
Appointment to this post will require an Enhanced Disclosure via the Criminal Records Bureau.  
Thamesview School operates a non-smoking policy*



**NORTHFLEET SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**  
Hall Road, Northfleet, Kent DA11 8AQ  
Tel: 0844 477 2525 Fax: 01474 335058

We are seeking to appoint an  
**Academic Coach for English – 37 hours per week commencing**  
**8.15 a.m. with varying end times**  
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## CRICKET

BY TOM HOWARD

## Kent League Premier Division

## The Mote 1st XI v St Lawrence &amp; Highland Court 1st XI

CAPTAIN Tom Harvey fell two runs short of a century as he helped The Mote to a convincing eight-wicket win to maintain their unbeaten start to the season.

After last week's winning draw against Gore Court, Harvey's side were determined to record their first win of the new campaign at the weekend.

Visitors St Lawrence & Highland Court were put into bat and found it hard to find any rhythm at the crease following a steady start from openers Dominic Chambers and Daniel Stickels. The pair put on 51 for the first wicket before Glen Aukett and Laurence Waters struck.

Aukett continued to trouble the St Lawrence batsmen as he took three more wickets, leaving the visitors rocking at 127 for 6. Shannon Fattore proved to be the only resistance as his 56 pushed the visitors to 217. Aukett was the pick of the bowlers with figures of 4 for 51.

With the win a realistic possibility, The Mote set to work on chasing down the total. Despite losing Matthew White (12) early on, Harvey (98) and James Hodgson (89) built an impressive partnership which edged them within touching distance of victory. However, Harvey fell two runs short of his century so it was left to Hodgson and James Marriott to hit the winning runs with an over to spare.

The Mote are third in the table but this could all change after this Saturday's trip to early leaders Bexley.

# The Mote maintain their unbeaten run



IN THE RUNS: The Mote's batsmen put on an impressive display to clinch their first win of the season

## SCORE CARD

## St Lawrence &amp; Highland Court 1st XI

	Runs
Dominic Chambers ct Back b Waters	29
Daniel Stickels b Aukett	32
Paul Dixey ct Water sb Aukett	26
Matthew Lincoln ct Fordham b Aukett	18
Lewis Jenkins ct Marriott b Aukett	3
Stuart Paine b Parsons	13
Shannon Fattore not out	56
Alex Reese ct Hodgson b Waters	6
Kit Sims ct Fordham b Harvey	21
Benjamin Easter run out	5
Luke Rumbelow lbw b Hodgson	0
Extras (4lb 4w)	27
Total (all out, 53 overs)	217

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Kenny George	3	0	21	0
Tom Parsons	9	0	45	1
Glen Aukett	15	0	51	4
Laurence Waters	15	0	46	2
Tom Harvey	7	0	35	1
James Hodgson	35	0	15	1

## The Mote 1st XI

	Runs
Matthew White ct Easter b Lincoln	12
Tom Harvey b Easter	98
James Hodgson not out	89
James Marriott not out	13
Chris Back did not bat	
Laurence Waters did not bat	
Daniel Thirkell did not bat	
Tom Parsons did not bat	
Glen Aukett did not bat	
Alex Fordham did not bat	
Kenny George did not bat	
Extras (5b 1lb 2w)	8
Total (2 wickets, 54 overs)	220

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Luke Rumbelow	9	1	37	0
Matthew Lincoln	11	3	36	1
Kit Sims	5	1	22	0
Alex Reese	15	3	55	0
Benjamin Easter	135	1	62	1

Picture: ICR/KIPPO

## LOCAL CRICKET ROUND-UP

## KENT LEAGUE DIVISION THREE

## Old Elthamians 1st XI v Addington Village 1st XI

ADDINGTON Village remain top of Kent League Division Three after recording a six-wicket victory at Old Elthamians.

Addington's attack ripped through the home side's batting line-up, bowling them out for just 122 inside 37 overs. Edward Thorogood was the only batsmen to stand up to the bowlers with a defiant knock of 45. Dan Walton was the star with the ball with figures of 5 for 42.

After a slow but steady start, Addington cruised to their second win of the season in the 30th over. Neil Scott was Addington's man with the bat as he scored 40 of their 124 runs as they claimed victory with more than 20 overs to spare.

## Old Elthamians 1st XI

	Runs
Daniel Driscoll	0
Samuel Lockwood	3
Dylan De Beer	11
Edward Thorogood	45
Calum Nash	18
Fin Simpson	1
Andrew Hammond	4
Tom Scorgie	20
John Nicholls	1
Blaine Carey	4
Jack Green	0
Extras	15
Total	122

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Joe Pigott	7	3	21	2
Tom Nissen	10	3	30	1
Dan Walton	11.4	2	42	5
Neil Scott	5	2	9	2
Duncan Brown	3	0	12	0

## Addington Village 1st XI

	Runs
Neil Miller	9
Ray Van Schoor	20
Joe Pigott	17
Ben Buet	24
Neil Scott	40
Duncan Brown	0
Will Jeffery	0
Tom Nissen	0
James Fullagar	0
Dan Walton	0
Simon Briley	0
Extras	14
Total	124

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Tom Scorgie	9	2	31	1
Blaine Carey	9	1	30	1
Jack Green	4	0	27	1
Edward Thorogood	5.3	0	21	0
John Nicholls	2	0	8	1

## KENT LEAGUE DIVISION FIVE

## Offham 1st XI v Blackheath 3rd XI

A CENTURY from Tom Gittings proved crucial as Offham completed a six-wicket win in a high-scoring game at Church Road.

Blackheath chose to bat first and it proved to be a good decision, as they put a huge 305 on the board from their 50 overs. Joe Ryan (112) and Simon Martin (86) scored the majority of Blackheath's total.

On a wicket which proved ideal for run scoring, Offham quickly set about hunting down the total. Gittings (109) alongside Kraig Corke (70) and Ben Gittings (74) put the hosts in a position to challenge for the win. The run chase was successfully completed in the 49th over by Graham Razezy and Lawrence Bell.

## Blackheath 3rd XI

	Runs
Steve Turner	33
Joe Ryan	112
Simon Martin	86
Hamish Purdey	22
Mehdi Abbas	0
Mitu Ahmed	18
Alex Price	3
Matt Orford	0
Chris Brassington	0
Morgan Mahoney	0
Daniel Carter	0
Extras	28
Total	305

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Leonard Watt	7	1	52	1
Nigel Stoodley	6	0	36	0
Graham Razezy	15	1	79	0
Simon Hallbrook	10	4	31	1
Ben Regan	9	0	67	5
Mervyn Brooker	3	0	23	0

## Offham 1st XI

	Runs
Tom Gittings	109
Kraig Corke	70
Ben Gittings	74
Graham Razezy	21
Leonard Watt	1
Lawrence Bell	4
Adam Kent	0
Ben Regan	0
Mervyn Brooker	0
Simon Hallbrook	0
Nigel Stoodley	0
Extras	25
Total	306

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Chris Brassington	15	1	61	1
Daniel Carter	8.5	0	68	1
Matt Orford	10	1	52	1
Morgan Mahoney	7	0	51	0
Mehdi Abbas	8	0	57	1

## KENT REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EAST

## Yalding 1st XI v Mersham Sports 1st XI

CENTURIES from Mersham Sports' Dave Fagg and Alan Stevens condemned Yalding to a four-wicket defeat in the Kent Cricket Regional League.

Yalding gave themselves a platform for victory after scoring 251 for 6 from their 46 overs, which included an unbeaten century from Marty Hollis.

However, Mersham didn't let the total worry them and their batsmen adapted to the challenge. Centuries from Fagg (100) and Stevens (109) put the visitors in a great position. Despite a solid showing from Jumshad Haider, who took four wickets, Mersham won the game with four overs remaining.

## Yalding 1st XI

	Runs
Matthew Thomas	1
Graham Hutchins	19
Marty Hollis	101
Usman Pervaiz	38
Alistair Ratcliff	10
Joel Shopland	0
Zeeshan Fazal	55
Mohammad Waseem	10
Jumshad Haider	0
Dushyanth Gnanappiragasam	0
Anthony Shepherd	17
Extras	17
Total	251

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
John Harman	12	3	48	0
Kevin Wise	8	1	40	2
Vince Tyrell	12	3	41	0
Darren Pugh	11	0	76	0
Alan Stevens	3	0	38	1

## Mersham Sports 1st XI

	Runs
Darren Pugh	11
E Holland-Kemp	12
Alan Stevens	109
David Harman	0
Rob Wilson	2
Dave Fagg	100
William Colthup	0
John Southern	0
Kevin Wise	0
John Harman	0
Vince Tyrell	0
Extras	18
Total	252

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Jumshad Haider	12	5	54	4
Usman Pervaiz	12	1	45	1
Anthony Shepherd	7.2	0	50	0
Dushyanth Gnanappiragasam	4	0	44	0
Mohammad Waseem	4	0	54	0

## KENT LEAGUE PREMIER 2ND XI

## Whitstable 2nd XI v The Mote 2nd XI

A DISASTROUS performance from The Mote 2nd XI batsmen saw them collapse to a 90-run defeat at Whitstable.

A win seemed a realistic aim for The Mote after bowling Whitstable out for 191. Only Byron Gould (90) was allowed to settle at the crease, before falling to Alistair Owen-Browne, who ripped through the line-up. He finished with figures of 6 for 31.

However, The Mote struggled in their reply from the start and were unable to cope with Whitstable bowlers Sean French, Stuart Clements and Jack Crouch. They rattled through the batting line-up, bowling the Maidstone side out for 101 inside 32 overs.

## Whitstable 2nd XI

	Runs
Jamie Watkins	5
Byron Gould	90
Sean French	25
Darren Bovis	0
Michael Seager	0
Jack Crouch	23
Stuart Clements	13
Dean Lewis	0
Andy Robertson	4
Terry McDowell	17
Jonathan Sargent	6
Extras	8
Total	191

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Ed De Lucy	8	1	47	1
Arifullah Afmat	8	3	32	0
Danny Rowe	10	1	39	1
Alistair Owen-Browne	14	5	31	6
Richard Coles	9.5	0	41	2

## The Mote 2nd XI

	Runs
Warren Jackson	13
Peter Bowles	0
Paul Merwood	12
Richard Coles	25
Alistair Owen-Browne	0
Danny Rowe	5
Ed De Lucy	14
Nathan White	0
Nathan Waite	4
Chris Coles	7
Arifullah Afmat	0
Extras	21
Total	101

Bowlers	O	M	R	W
Sean French	11.1	1	28	2
Andy Robertson	6	1	16	0
Stuart Clements	10.1	5	9	5
Jack Crouch	5.5	0	36	3



# Stones set for another round of talks with Ash

## FOOTBALL

BY FRED ATKINS

MAIDSTONE United chairman Paul Bowden-Brown insists the outlook for the club is "positive" despite a meeting with shareholder Oliver Ash that failed to resolve the issue of an outstanding debt of £100,000.

Ash's company, Richmond, are overdue payment of a loan made to the Kent club and can call the debt in at any time, potentially putting the Stones at risk.

An initial meeting on May 7 aimed at settling the dispute ended in stalemate and after a second meeting last week, Bowden-Brown would only say: "Discussions are going on regarding the future of the club and are positive."

Ash, who owns 25 per cent of Maidstone, declined to comment for the time being.

Bowden-Brown also defended the club after it was criticised for a statement clarifying events surrounding a failed bid to the Football Foundation (FF) in 2008.

The Stones prepared a bid in August 2008, applying for a grant of £1,150,000 towards their proposed new stadium at James Whatman Way, but three months later it was

announced the bid had been rejected.

Confusion arose last week when it emerged the FF had never received a bid, but the Maidstone chairman said informal consultations with the foundation effectively constituted a rejection.

"We sat down with two very important people at the foundation, who said that although it was one of the best bids they'd ever seen from a presentation point of view, there were two problems," he said. "One, we were a limited company and not strictly a not-for-profit organisation, and two, there was the 3G (artificial pitch) aspect."

On the transfer front the club are making progress and are looking at central midfielders and strikers as their main targets this summer, but won't find that easy with continued speculation that players haven't been paid deferred wages, amounting to about six weeks.

Assistant manager Tony Cornwell said: "We're looking in various areas but at the moment central midfield and up front are the most important areas we are looking to strengthen. Defensively we seem to be okay, but we may need to bring some additional players. It will all become clearer by the end of the month."

The Stones have confirmed four pre-season friendlies with Peter Nott's side due to travel to Erith & Belvedere (July 17), Thamesmead Town (July 31), Whitstable Town (August 10) and Chatham Town (August 14).



Picture: STEVE TERRELL

**POSITIVE:** Maidstone chairman Paul Bowden-Brown is confident ahead of another round of talks with investor Oliver Ash, who has 25 per cent shares

## GOLF



**IN-FORM:** Matt Ford picked up his first win of the season by lifting the Kent PGA Pro-Am

## PGA Pro-Am is a victory for Ford

TUDOR Park professional golfer Matt Ford won the Kent PGA Pro-Am at Walmer & Kingsdown Golf Club last week.

The event attracted 17 professionals and teams from across the county but it was the Maidstone golfer who won the tournament after carding a four-under-par round of 68. Ant Tarchetti of Princes Golf Club and Richard Wallis from Walmer & Kingsdown Golf Club finished tied second.

Ford's team, which consisted of Walmer & Kingsdown members Mick Paul, Nigel Donovan and John Reynolds, also won the team championship with a score of 15-under-par.

Ford, who plays his trade on the EuroPro Tour, returns to action this week at the Pandora Open held at Burhill Golf Club, near Walton-on-Thames. The 54-hole tournament begins today.

He finished tied 33rd in the opening tour event at Wensum Valley last month.

# Sponsors aid Reeves' Isle of Man TT bid

Picture: VALLY WATERS



**READY:** Tim Reeves cannot wait to begin his bid for Isle of Man TT glory next month

## MOTORSPORT

MULTIPLE world sidcar champion Tim Reeves will compete in the Isle of Man TT next month after securing the sponsorship required to do battle in the notorious road race.

The Maidstone-based sidcar veteran admitted last month his chances of competing at the famous road race were slim after one of his major sponsors withdrew. But increased support from existing backers Double M Racing and Haith booked his place on the start line.

The 38-year-old is a three-time world champion but has never won the prestigious event on the epic 37.7-mile Manx road course. The closest he has come to reaching the top step of the podium was a third-place finish on his debut in 2008.

Reeves said: "We had a few problems with sponsorship early on but thankfully that is all behind us now and we are now getting ready for the TT. I was really unsure if it was going to happen this year but they've pulled me out the mire and I'm now fully focused on getting the F2 bike ready in time and repaying them with the best result I possibly can."

Joining Reeves at the TT is Maidstone rider Steve Mercer, who is aiming to win the privateer superbike category. It will be the 28-year-old's second visit to the island after finishing as the top rookie in the event last year. Despite bruising his lungs, kidneys and spine in an accident at Oliver's Mount last month, he is determined to line up on the grid.

Free practice on the island starts this Saturday.

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